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ABSTRACT

This handbook is addressed to parent and citizen groups who are seeking to advance the cause of educational equity. The book includes exercises which call for the reader to apply information and learning to his or her local situation. Individual chapters describe concerns of parents and citizens facing desegregation in their community's schools and suggest how they can form change groups. In addition, a wide variety of approaches to school desegregation are reviewed and examples of programs that deal with racial equity and the quality of education are presented. Targets and strategies for change are identified, as are ways of getting necessary information. Finally, groups are advised on the selection of change strategies and how to follow-up to ensure the realization of a change project. (Author/WAM)

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Action for Educational Equity

A Guide for Parents and Members of Community Groups

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ACTION FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY:
A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY GROUPS

by

James E. Crowfoot
Bunyan I. Bryant
Mark A. Chesler
with a Foreword by Don Davies

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FOREWORD

Don Davies

President Institute for Responsive Education

The Institute for Responsive Education was created in 1973 in the belief that fundamental reform of society's institutions is needed if we are to meet our unfulfilled national goals of social justice, recognition and protection of individual and group diversity, reduction of crime and violence, and universal access to high quality human services such as health care and education. We saw institutions as inadequately responsive to the diverse needs of all the people -- they serve least well the least powerful in society: the poor, minorities, the working class, and the handicapped.

We saw lack of equity as the foremost social and educational problem facing our country. We saw organized citizen action as necessary to work for equity within the political system. Our view and mission have not changed. Equity remains the goal; citizen action a necessary means to achieve the goal. This is the reason and the framework for this handbook: to provide assistance to citizens and organizations seeking to advocate and achieve greater equity in education. The most significant educational equity issues in which citizens are involved are: desegregation, bilingual education, sex equity in curriculum and programs, affirmative action in employment, and the provision of educational services for children with special needs.

On each of these issues, some citizens are raising questions or grievances which are a matter of *right* rather than simply a matter of *interest* (as when an interest group seeks increased funding for a program from which it benefits). For example, some citizens are pressing local and state policymakers to make bilingual education programs available to all children whose English language ability is so limited that they cannot benefit from instruction in English. Other citizens are pressing state and local decisionmakers to assure that opportunities for participation in vocational training are not determined by sex. In both cases, the demands are made as a matter of *right* rather than *interest* (as would be the case if parents were advocating increased opportunities for art and music instruction in the elementary school or larger allocations of funds for hiring teachers of advanced mathematics in the secondary schools).

In some cases, the citizen action involves establishing the right in Federal, state or local policy in the first place (e.g., establishing through Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act the right of handicapped children to educational services and facilities provided other children). In other cases, the citizen action is directed at protecting or extending a right or benefit that has already been established by law, but has not been fully implemented by public agencies or fully accepted by all segments of the community.

Equity issues share several other important characteristics:

- They are often redistributive in their impact. Conflict comes about because the protagonists seek to obtain services for a group or population that does not currently receive them. Providing this service to the new population may mean doing it at the expense of other groups currently receiving benefits.
- The rights being sought are not divisible. One cannot, generally, "split the difference."
- These issues have high moral salience for the groups and individuals affected. Action taken on them is usually based on a sense that the current situation is morally "wrong." They involve a concept of social justice.
- They are zero-sum in the sense that in every action there is a winner and a loser, a plus on one hand and a minus on the other, which when combined add up to zero. The remedies sought in an equity action confer a benefit to one party and result in a perceived loss to another party. Although it can be argued that all benefit whenever an injustice is remedied, if there were no perception of loss by one party, there would be no conflict in desegregation and other equity issues and, hence, no need for this handbook.

A short list of educational issues that do not share these characteristics includes: citizen access to educational collective bargaining, questions of school improvement, contests over superintendent selection or instructional materials or approaches, and controversies over school closure. These conflicts are either based on interests rather than rights; can sometimes be resolved by "splitting the difference"; can be resolved by resorting to technical or pedagogical rather than moral considerations; or are not redistributive, allowing a "win-win" situation.

The authors have chosen citizen action in desegregation as their exemplar of action for equity for two categories of reasons: first, its prominence in the public eye and, second, because desegregation is perhaps the most conflict-filled of the equity issues we have described.

In all of the equity issues, citizens cannot assume, but must rather create, a consensus on the issue at question. And, when values and moral rights are at stake, it is always difficult to compromise -- to split the difference -- to resolve conflict.

In desegregation, and in the other equity issues as well, many of the sources of the problem and many of its remedies do not lie within the schooling system itself. There are no simple pedagogical or administrative solutions to the problems of fundamental social inequity. But the manifestations of such inequity cannot be tolerated within the school system and the school system is obliged to take all pedagogical and administrative steps within its control to correct the inequity.

Whenever differences in the allocation of fundamental rights occurs in the American educational system, we believe action should be taken to right that inequity. Since Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, and before, groups and individuals have been working to eliminate racial segregation in schooling. Still, it may be argued, inequality brought about by discrimination and segregation is the largest factor interfering in our search for a just society.

Despite the scope of the problem, we believe this book can provide a framework for citizen action to mediate segregation's effects and to improve education for all children. We also believe that the framework set down in the following pages can be used in the whole range of equity issues we have described above.

This handbook is addressed to parent and citizen groups who are seeking to advance the cause of equity in American school systems and communities. The authors draw on years of rich experience in working with citizen groups, especially those involved in school desegregation. This experience can be of great value to other citizen groups who are working on equity issues or are organizing to do so.

The timing of this publication is significant. Desegregation and other equity issues have become politically more unpopular. The Reagan Administration, in scores of specific and documentable actions, has sought to weaken the laws and regulations that put the legal, economic, and moral force of the Federal government on the side of increased equity. Progress made in the past thirty years toward equity is clearly threatened in a time marked by political conservatism and fiscal retrenchment at local and state as well as Federal levels.

Those who have benefited most from 30 years of effort to increase educational equity are relatively poor and powerless and relatively unorganized to combat efforts to weaken or remove the laws, regulations, policies and programs which encourage educational equity. Organized citizen action by those who have benefited and by their allies who are committed to the goals of equity is of paramount importance in the 1980's if those goals are not to fade and become only dimly remembered historical footnotes.

Fortunately, citizen activism is far from dead. In fact, it is flourishing -- witness the nationwide, grassroots anti-nuclear proliferation movement. We hope this book provides some suggestions for activism to affect change, meaningful change, in important educational issues.

The Institute for Responsive Education is pleased to make this book available to activists at this time when both the need and the motivation for citizen action for educational equity are so great.

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Jan Wright worked diligently in supporting this project by organizing and maintaining files of materials and guiding research and materials retrieval. A number of other colleagues in school systems and communities around the country have been helpful in reading, commenting on and improving this work.

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Editing and production work at the Institute for Responsive Education was the responsibility of Owen Heleen. W. Dana Rudolph, IRE Office Manager, typed this final draft of the manuscript.

INTRODUCTION

THE CHALLENGE OF ACTION FOR EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Inequality and injustice are facts of life in America, and in schools across our nation. But in many schools and communities people are acting together to change this situation, and to create greater equality and justice in local school systems. This is what Action for Educational Equity is all about.

Concerns about educational equity focus on many examples of personal and institutional discrimination based upon differences in race, sex, socioeconomic status, age and physical and emotional abilities. Students of color, women, students from families with low and moderate incomes, and the handicapped experience different treatment in schools than do other young people. They are relegated to positions of inferiority and receive inadequate resources. Their victimization is rationalized and justified by powerful groups and by dominant values and norms. They and their allies struggle for respect and fair treatment -- in a word, "equity." Educational equity denotes conditions of schooling whereby all groups and individuals are respected and treated fairly, particularly those who were previously victims of injustice.

Racism and racial injustice in schooling are particularly potent and malignant forms of educational inequality. Concerns about the lack of respect and fair treatment for people of color have been the focus of major struggles for changes in schooling for more than three decades. These struggles for racial equity often involve other struggles for educational equity as well -- such as women's rights, education for the handicapped and compensatory education.

One major strategy for dealing with issues of racial inequality and injustice in schools has been desegregation. In the quest for school desegregation, we have learned much that is useful for attempts to alter all the other forms of educational inequity. Desegregation has not been the only path to racial equity, but it has been and continues to be an important option for school systems across America. It is an important source of information and experience for everyone involved in actions for educational equity.

Acting for racial equity in schools involves a complex process of change. In many cases, racial justice efforts and desegregation planning have been accompanied by conflict and crisis. However, change of this sort need not be disruptive. Even when it is, this disruption may have many positive consequences. We all need to learn how to bring about changes peacefully and more effectively.

Because parents and other community members support schools and are committed to effective education, their active involvement is needed to achieve the changes inherent in successful efforts to move toward a more equitable society. Effective parent action in issues of this sort requires information, planning and commitment. For most parents, this may require new and higher levels of involvement in school programs. It can lead them to become involved in the shaping of schools. To take effective action at the local level, parents need to learn from others' experiences and to understand the contexts within which school change takes place.

Parents must not forget the larger situation of residential and economic inequality. Full racial equity in schooling with equal and high quality education which respects the different values and histories of all racial groups, requires fundamental changes beyond the boundaries of schooling. It requires changes in housing, jobs, and public services. School desegregation can be an important first step in this direction. But to take this first step, parents' concerns for safety and high quality education for their children must be satisfied.

In writing this handbook, we've brought together practical information from many sources to assist parents and other community members in becoming effective in their work toward educational equity. Its contents are based on the experiences of parents dealing with desegregation and equity issues in dozens of communities, and research findings about the processes of school change. Numerous examples and conclusions about what is known about school desegregation are described against the context of what is known about effective planned change in other equity issues. We've organized the book's chapters in terms of a sequence of the major steps in achieving change. Our goal has been to provide useable information for becoming active in change, in a framework that avoids oversimplifying a complicated situation and pretending change is easy. It is not. It may take practice

Therefore, we have included exercises calling for the reader to practice applying information and learning to his or her local situation. Several chapters focus on the sequence of activities involved in parents working together to achieve change. Chapter 1 describes the typical concerns of parents and community members facing school desegregation. It provides examples from many different communities and schools. Chapter 2 is filled with information about starting your own parent change group. It will help you have productive meetings and to get going quickly on your group's pressing concerns. Chapter 3 describes a wide variety of specific approaches to school desegregation and focuses on examples of change programs that deal with parents' concerns about racial equity and the quality of education. Chapter 4 will help parent groups to establish specific goals and targets for their change effort, and to plan how to achieve them. It suggests several alternative strategies for making changes. In order to deal with parents' concerns in your community, you will have to find out more about your local schools, and what parents want. Chapter 5 provides help on ways of getting information. Chapter 6 will help you in deciding on the program your group will pursue, which includes specific targets and an explicit strategy, and in planning how to implement your group's program. Chapters 7 and 8 describe activities parent change groups use in implementing their change programs. Finally, Chapter 9 addresses the important issue of following-up your change project to be sure that your original concepts and the goals of your program are actually being satisfied.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS HANDBOOK AND HOW?

This handbook was written for parents and for professionals who work with groups of parents. It will be useful to individual parents and other community members who want to understand what they can do in the process of moving toward equity in schooling. It speaks most directly to parents who have committed themselves to becoming active in this process.

Staffs of social service agencies, municipal government departments, schools and school districts will find it helpful to understanding parents' concerns about equity and their potential to act effectively on these concerns. Human service professionals will find it helpful in their efforts to assist parent groups and community organizations working on issues of equity and desegregation.

We suggest, first, a look at the table of contents and then a quick scan of chapter introductions. Take the chapters in order and try to apply the information in them to your own schools and community. If you are already working on school equity issues, turn to the chapters that address the challenges you are facing.

In using this handbook, remember that each local situation is different. Each school and community has its own problems and its own positive features. Discover and support the positive commitments, skills and initiatives that exist in your school and community. Achieving equity in education depends on the actions of local parents and educators.

CHAPTER 1

PARENT AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS ABOUT RACIAL EQUITY AND SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

Most community members approach educational equity and school desegregation with a variety of opinions and concerns. This chapter will help you identify specific feelings about these issues in your local community. Later chapters will show you how to use these concerns to help achieve desegregation that is peaceful, effective, and which brings about educational improvement.

GENERAL OPINIONS ABOUT DESEGREGATION

It is natural for parents and other community members to have strong feelings about issues of equity and desegregation. You probably have heard a great deal about such issues in other places. You may have experienced the injustice and costs of inequality and segregation directly. The prospect of local desegregation means change, and few people are indifferent to important changes.

Exercise 1.1 (p. 6) is one of many in which we will ask you to assess your own situation and plan how to influence the situation to meet your needs. On the left are statements of commonly held opinions about desegregation. You may want to write down one or two additional statements about school desegregation that express opinions that you feel strongly about, and think others might agree with. Check the boxes indicating whether or not you agree with each statement.

PARENTS' CONCERNS ABOUT DESEGREGATION

It is hard to respond to people's specific concerns about desegregation in your community without finding out what they are. What things are they worried about? What do they care about most? Vigorous and effective parental actions require that interested people identify their concerns as an important first step to action. When you and others understand the specific concerns of parents in your situation, you will be in a better position to join hands in working on these matters.

Exercise 1.1 Survey of Opinions and Feelings About School Desegregation

Position Statement:

Place a check in the box that best represents your point of view.

How do I feel about school desegregation:

	YES	MAYBE	NO
1. School racial segregation is a violation of the law	☐	☐	☐
2. Desegregation is a way to correct a violation of the law	☐	☐	☐
3. Desegregation violates my rights	☐	☐	☐
4. Desegregation is an opportunity for educational improvement	☐	☐	☐
5. Desegregation is a social experiment directed by outsiders	☐	☐	☐
6. Desegregation is complicated and confusing	☐	☐	☐
7. Desegregation is O.K. if it is done right.	☐	☐	☐

What should I do about desegregation:

	YES	MAYBE	NO
1. Cooperate with the system's plan	☐	☐	☐
2. Try to influence the system's plan to make it better	☐	☐	☐
3. Fight or resist any plan for desegregation	☐	☐	☐
4. Do everything possible to eliminate confusion	☐	☐	☐
5. Get together with other people to help make it work.	☐	☐	☐

Before contacting others, think of your own concerns about school desegregation. Use the checklist in Exercise 1.2 (p.8). These concerns are commonly held by parents and other community members in school systems experiencing desegregation. Use the blanks to add other concerns you yourself have. After completing this Exercise go on to Exercise 1.3, "Assessment of Other People's Concerns About Desegregation" (p. 9) This exercise is designed to help you think about other people in your community and the extent to which each of these items concerns them.

As you probably already have discovered, people hold diverse opinions and feelings about school desegregation. Even though most people seem to support the general idea of school desegregation, that does not mean they are in favor of it happening to them, in their community, or in a particular way. What is most important is to find out what people will do in your community. Some people will work to help the desegregation process, some people will sit back and watch, and some people will resist.

Be alert to different people's concerns, and to all the feelings and opinions in your community. Listen to opinions of others. Be prepared for the possibility of change in these opinions. Everyone wants their ideas recognized and acknowledged. If you ignore opinions or feelings, you risk turning people off. It is easier to work with others when you listen to and understand their ideas, and acknowledge their opinions.

These concerns can also be seen as the goals for an effective program to attain racial equity in your schools and community. For instance, we can say that desegregation should be done in a way that:

- Guarantees the safety and security of the children
- Improves the quality of education they receive
- Is fair to the culture and heritage of all racial groups and to students of both sexes and all economic statuses
- Provides opportunities for students to influence educators and to express their feelings about school
- Provides parents and community groups with adequate information about all aspects of the school plan
- Creates opportunities for parents to influence what goes on in school
- Keeps costs down and gathers resources to support new programs
- Seeks and finds support from other groups in the community, and relates the school to other community issues

Exercise 1.2 Checklist of Individual Concerns About Local School Desegregation

Areas of Potential Concern	Extent to Which I Have This Concern		
	A LOT	SOMEWHAT	NOT MUCH
1. Safety and security of the children			
2. Improvement of educational quality			
3. Fairness to all groups			
4. Student influence and feelings			
5. Adequacy of information about what's happening			
6. Opportunities for parents to influence what's happening			
7. Costs and availability of funds			
8. Wider community support			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			

Exercise 1.3 Assessment of Other People's Concerns About Local School Desegregation

Areas of Potential Concern	How Many Other People Seem to Care About These Issues		
	A LOT	SOME	NOT MANY
1. Safety and security of the children			
2. Improvement of educational quality			
3. Fairness to all groups			
4. Student influence and feelings			
5. Adequacy of information about what's happening			
6. Opportunity of parents to influence what's happening			
7. Costs and availability of funds			
8. Wider community support			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			

If desegregation were to proceed in these ways, most people would support it and work to help bring it about. All these concerns are also relevant to other equity issues.

In the pages that follow, we discuss in more detail the eight sets of concerns that can lead to worthy goals. Similar concerns are present in most local schools. People just becoming involved in school desegregation and other change efforts often wonder if they are alone in their concern or if what they are concerned about is really important. Finding out a little more about typical local concerns and goals can help you and others feel more comfortable and confident in your own ideas.

Safety and Security

Because race relations and desegregation sometimes give rise to fear and anger, parents and students often are concerned with physical safety. This concern is heightened by the fact that desegregation requires new patterns of behavior in unfamiliar places.

Concerns about safety focus on school activities outside the classroom, such as during recess, in lunchrooms, playgrounds and study halls, in extracurricular activities and on buses. When these situations are loosely supervised, students may be unclear about the rights and responsibilities of everyone involved. They easily can be arenas for the expression of pent-up feelings that have their roots in other school or community activities. Classrooms and other more structured arenas frequently don't permit students to express their feelings of confusion or fear about people of other races. Adult authority or control, physical separation, and explicit regulations may drive issues underground, only to have them emerge elsewhere.

But students and parents are not concerned only about issues of physical safety; they also are concerned about the emotional security, satisfaction, and well-being of everyone involved in schooling. Some people are not as able as others to take the pressure of highly conflictual situations. These students or parents may be emotionally upset by school changes and they need some help.

Educational Quality

Many parents, of all racial groups, are concerned about the impact of desegregation on the quality of education students receive. This concern often is expressed as one of the major reasons minority parents support desegregation. But some minority parents do not believe desegregation brings about higher quality education unless other changes are made. White parents, too, are often concerned that desegregation will lower school standards for the education their children now receive. Since segregated school systems often contain inequities in facilities, materials, and personnel, desegregation has provided the impetus for many concerned students and parents to try to eliminate these inequities and improve education for all youngsters. However, Judy Bingham, a white parent in Berkeley, California, felt such needs were not dealt with in her community and expressed her feelings this way:[1]

> I have never been of the belief that there was any reason why black students should not be given the sense that they must achieve, and I feel that the district has failed them in this regard. They failed the non-minority students as well because achievement has not been made a very big issue.

Desegregation also raises questions about what schools should be teaching and how they should be doing it. Students and parents have strongly held concerns regarding curriculum, teaching and learning, staff commitment and competencies, supplies and equipment, and general school climate. Parents in the Detroit Public Schools developed "A Parent's Action Guide" which addresses this concern for quality education:[2]

> Parents have the right to expect continuous and quality education for their children...[and] the right to expect adequate materials and supervisory procedures to support the regular school program for educating their children.

One way issues of educational quality can be identified is through an analysis of the competency and performance of the instructional and administrative staff. Especially in rapidly changing situations, staff members will need to develop new competencies. They may need to relate to parents in new ways, in ways that help assure parents and students of the teaching staff's intention to improve the quality of education. Parents in many cities have become concerned about staff competency and their own exclusion from hiring and monitoring educational staff.

Fairness to All Groups

Desegregation brings together students from varied cultural backgrounds, sometimes different races and sometimes from different economic groups within the same race. Different racial and economic groups may have different values and traditions, learning needs, and often different educational goals. The new diversity possible during desegregation is praised by W. Harry Davis, Director of the Minneapolis, Minnesota, School Board:[3]

> ...Desegregation has a great effect on the quality of education. Because I think we are opening doors to our children today... speaking about my culture and background [which] they never knew about...they [learn] about all cultures...all major contributions...that one race or one individual nationality is not superior or inferior to another....

For diversity to be seen as positive, and not confusing, a desegregated school must strive for maximum respect toward and encouragement of the full variety of values present within American communities. In that way, racial equity can help lead to economic and sexual equity as well.

For instance, think about your answers to the questions in Exercise 1.2. Will the answers of black or Hispanic parents be similar to those of white parents? Will the answers of poor parents be similar to those who are more affluent? Do all these parents have the same concerns, or do their priorities differ somewhat? You could share this list of concerns with parents of other groups, and find the answer to this question of diversity.

Students and parents concerned about the quality of racial relationships want to know how desegregation will affect those relationships, or how the rewards and resources of the school (e.g., student leadership positions, counseling attention, curriculum emphases, athletic team participation, etc.) will be shared among different racial groups. We all seek respect and understanding from others.

A meaningful approach to diversity in school requires vigorous attention to all aspects of racism. After all, racism helped create segregation, and supported the political and economic dominance of white/Anglo groups. Dealing with racism in education requires attention to more than student assignment patterns. Office procedures, disciplinary regulations, staffing patterns, curriculum, texts and materials, language, educators' attitudes and assumptions, instructional styles and procedures, school community relations, purchasing policies and community job and leadership opportunities are all areas that require attention.

Many parents facing school desegregation desire opportunities whereby their own racial group can maintain its own identity and cultural integrity. Such concerns may focus on a special curriculum, voluntary student meetings or clubs, particular teachers and administrators, or multilingual programs. The last is especially important for parents who speak a language other than standard English, and who wish their children to maintain familiarity with this language. Bilingual programs are frequently an important concern during desegregation, especially if it appears youngsters who already have been a part of such special programs are to be spread throughout the schools of a large area. Special events, celebrations, ethnic foods, and fashions are also important for minority parents who have a strong sense of their own culture and who wish to see it preserved and enriched.

Desegregation will not increase respect for cultural diversity if it seeks only to assimilate minorities into white/Anglo schools and traditions. Many people fear being assimilated, being expected to feel and behave like a cultural majority. Support for minority groups' traditions and cultural styles will help show that the majority truly respects its neighbors' cultural diversity.

Students' Influence and Feelings

In the 1960's and '70's, there were many local groups focusing on equity issues concerning the rights of youth in schools. In part, these concerns were aroused by questions of fair play in authoritarian schools, where teachers and principals ran schools with what seemed to be an iron hand. In part, these were an outgrowth of minority students' feelings of discriminatory treatment by adult white educators. Questions of freedom of speech and assembly, dress and fashion codes, and unfair administration of school rules and regulations led to many students feeling oppressed and alienated by schools. Today, advocacy programs for children and youth are found in many communities. The courts have become involved with problems of students' rights and roles, and with resolving intense conflicts between students and school authorities. Young people often experience problems in school when the people planning changes deal with them neither as full members of the school community, nor as a distinct group with special needs.

School rules and regulations themselves sometimes are a source of problems. For instance: it has become common for some schools to respond to the threat of student "disruption," or "misbehavior," with rigid disciplinary rules and regulations. These controls often inflame student resentment and resistance, and parents who also feel frustrated by the school may identify with such reactions. A student from Stamford, Connecticut, stated the concern for fair treatment this way:[4]

> Basically a teacher doesn't want people to feel that they're treating the white kids better than the black kids and they overdo it to the point where they let the blacks get away with so much and the white kids get away with so little that it makes the white kids mad. But when you get a teacher who says, well, I'm not going to let those black kids get away with nothing on me...and it's just the reverse and the black students get mad.

Students' sense of fair treatment has been demonstrated by researchers to be a critical issue affecting student morale and school atmosphere. Forehand, Ragosta and Rock (1976) indicate that students' academic achievement in desegregated schools is related significantly to their perception of school fairness.[5] In their view, fairness is so important that it ought to be a primary goal of desegregation plans, superceding other goals. In many school systems, inequitable and unfair disciplinary practices result in different punishment and suspension rates for whites and non-whites[6]

Adequacy of Information

Parents often feel they haven't been informed about the need for school change and do not understand the school system's desegregation plan. They may be unaware of equity problems and unprepared for the new educational options available to them and their children. Sometimes the school system itself may not have the answer: plans may not yet be formulated; discussions may still be occurring. At other times, schools have been remiss in informing parents and the community about current plans. Sometimes schools have not communicated in ways that are understandable or with opportunities for community members to ask questions. Ignorance and/or misinformation may lead to rumors and escalated fears and anxieties.

A well-developed plan for school closure can also fail because of a lack of community preparation and orientation. Youngsters being bused into a new, strange neighborhood can be expected to have a normal amount of fear and anxiety. Their parents, as well, need contact with and reassurance about these new environs, and preparation for new educational programs. A Boston parent, Jane Margulis, expressed this concern:[7]

> ...I was born and brought up in Boston, but had very little to do with black people all my life; had always gone to segregated schools. And it was very frightening for me to think that I

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> would be putting them on a bus and [sending them] to the black community which I knew nothing about...

An important part of preparation and orientation for desegregation is the generation of a sense of hope and vision. Parent and community groups often have only negative images regarding the changes involved in attaining equity. Reports of successful efforts from other cities and school systems can help provide a more positive and optimistic vision of educational and community futures. So can an optimistic approach by senior educators.

A final aspect of ongoing parent information about school operations and changes is parents' ability to monitor policies and programs. In most situations, the structure of school-community relations prevents students and parents from having an established role in monitoring the school. Steps should be taken, by the school district, to provide such a role.

Opportunities to Influence

Many parents feel they should have a regular and powerful voice in the management of the school. In the 1960's, there were widespread efforts to alter the relationship between schools and communities. In some communities, decentralization was used as an administrative process which permitted or encouraged parents to have a say in school operations (a "say," ranging from advice to an equal voice). In others, community control programs shifted the authority for governance to a local school board or consumer/client group. These efforts at change were part of a national dissatisfaction with large bureaucratic organizations. The push for community control was particularly strong in minority communities, where the majorities in charge of schools had been unable to deliver a high quality educational program to the urban poor. As Don Davies has indicated elsewhere:[8]

> Many Americans are fed up with the "best and the brightest" making decisions for them about wars, taxes, zoning, hospitals and schools. Many are frustrated with slow moving, unresponsive bureaucracies that crowd the landscape. They are suspicious of politicians and professionals and experts. Some are retreating into apathy; but others are organizing with like-minded people to build healthier communities and institutions and to demonstrate that ordinary Americans can be self-governing. They are banding together to try to make government and institutions more responsive, more accountable.

With this background, many parents in the 1980's wish to have local input into school decisionmaking about desegregation and other changes. For example, parents want to know about and be able to influence their child's school assignment; it is important that they detect and correct errors. In addition, parents must know about and be able to influence curricula and disciplinary policy, as well as how to exercise their rights within these policies. Students are also concerned about their influence within the school.

The goals of parents and students concerned with influence in school vary considerably. Some parents see the issue as "being heard" by educational professionals. They want to be able to offer advice and to speak their minds publicly, and to insure that educators hear and respond to them. Others wish to participate in policymaking, to be part of various problem-solving or program-planning groups and activities. Some parents cite the experience of parents who participate but are not listened to, who go to meetings but are ignored, who state their preferences but do not have the power to influence programs decided upon by educational authorities. Many of these parents avoid participation unless there is power attached to it. Unless they have a substantial degree of "shared control" over desegregation planning, they will not participate. This control is usually held in partnership with educational authorities. The entire range of participation and power, from "making input" and "being heard" to "making decisions" and "sharing control" has had its advocates in various cities and school systems.

Costs and Availability of Funds

Many parent groups are concerned about the cost of carrying out an effective plan for change. New transportation systems, new programs for students, new staff needs -- all may require money to operate from the local school system. Sometimes long overdue improvements in school facilities and program are required and recommended at the time of desegregation.

All too frequently, the focus of financially concerned parents and community groups becomes desegregation itself, rather than past inequities or past administrative and community failures that led to the need for new programs. As Katherine Schomp, a school board member in Denver, has indicated:[9]

> The practice of blaming every problem in the schools on the desegregation order [reflects] ...a refusal to devote sufficient resources of personnel, time and money to...deal positively and humanely with integration.

It is common for the least powerful group in the community, generally minorities and low income students, to be blamed inappropriately for the system's increased financial needs.

Parents and students often are unfamiliar with the ways in which the Federal, state and local governments finance schools. Budgetary procedures often are not presented in ways the community groups can understand. Thus, parents are easily manipulated by other groups' arguments about the "high cost of busing," etc., in desegregation. This also can lead to misunderstanding and to inadequate pressures and questions for school officials. Ultimately, it prevents school accountability to local community groups.

When desegregation occurs in cities with large minority or low income communities, the district already may be facing reductions in income from taxable businesses and affluent white residential property. In these circumstances, the financial problems of desegregation may be traced to economic flight and excessive profit-taking, rather than racial mixing and new educational programs. When the school bears the entire responsibility for racial equity, it unfortunately bears the financial burden as well. If other municipal agencies, corporations and private associations are involved in the desegregation effort, they can help generate community-wide initiatives on new financial necessities.

Community Support

Desegregation does not simply occur within the walls of school buildings; nor are its problems limited to educational ones. Often enough, the welfare of the entire urban or suburban environment is bound up in the way a community deals with desegregation opportunities. Several studies indicate, for instance, that desegregation may affect not only peace in the community, but prosperity and social progress more generally. If more affluent people flee the community because of imagined or real threats of desegregation, the tax base shrinks. If a city gets a "bad name" because of publicity regarding controversy or educational failure or mismanagement, others may withdraw their children from local schools or may leave town themselves.

Young people are not only students, but community members as well. However, school-aged people are denied many of the normal benefits and privileges of citizenship. They face high unemployment generally, with minority youth experiencing the highest levels in the nation. People under 18 do not have voting rights, nor can they serve in or be elected to public office. In many communities, youth face discriminatory treatment in business establishments, leisure activities, and public organizations.

All schools are dependent upon their community environment. Since they function within American society, they carry with them the institutional inequities (racism, sexism and economic discrimination) rampant in society. If this were not true, school organizations would be doing things in ways that were very different from the rest of the society. Concerns about these issues in schools often parallel similar concerns about discrimination in other social agencies and community institutions. Unless these broader concerns are dealt with, the school is left with an impossible and lonely task.

The power of these forces in the community setting is evident in various patterns whereby jobs, insurance, mortgages, loans, or public services are less available or denied to poorer areas of the city, to women, or to areas inhabited largely by minorities. We can see this power in the lack of equal facilities available for physically handicapped youth and adults. Examples of discrimination also may be seen in neighborhood transportation, municipal services such as refuse collection and street maintenance, political representation, and the like. These community practices affect the resources available to minority or poor groups. They also affect what concerned students bring with them to school. Desegregation efforts that do not address housing segregation, poor housing facilities, or financial discrimination in housing opportunities, are missing some of the key ingredients of community injustice.

School desegregation alone will have minimal impact on people's lives, including student performance, unless it is coupled with other issues in the local community. Many parent groups have begun to identify these issues, and to relate their local school desegregation plan to attempts to alter these other concerns as well. No one can reasonably expect a school system to accomplish such community change alone, nor perhaps even to take the lead in such an effort; but the school may be expected and required to be part of such a change process.

From Varying Opinions About Desegregation To Parents' Goals

We began this chapter by calling attention to the presence of a wide range of feelings and opinions about educational equity in general and school desegregation in particular. Parents' most frequent concerns about desegregation were described in detail. When these concerns are focused on by active groups of parents, they become change goals. By now, you have uncovered our most basic assumption about desegregation and educational equity. Effective desegregation means increased racial justice and improved education for all students. Solving one equity problem requires solving others as well. It requires substantial change in schools and communities. For this to happen, parents and community members must become active participants. The next chapter describes how parents can organize themselves alone or with the help of concerned professionals to exercise leadership in pursuing their concerns.

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3. *Fulfilling the Letter and Spirit*, p. 209.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

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9. *Fulfilling the Letter and Spirit*, p. 44.

CHAPTER 2

BUILDING YOUR CHANGE GROUP

To deal effectively with the concerns you identified in the first chapter requires working with other people. No one person acting alone can be effective in changing schools. Parents and community members concerned about desegregation and other equity issues in schooling need to get together to organize. This chapter tells you how to find and choose other people to work with and how to begin to work together.

One of the first questions you need to answer is, "Do I need to form a new organization or is there an existing group I can work with?" It will save you time and energy if there is an existing organization working on your concerns. Often, however, existing organizations have different priorities and may not have the time and energy to devote to equity issues. In some cases, existing organizations may be planning to work on closely related issues, but with a very different set of concerns than you have. Nevertheless, there may be room in these organizations for your concerns to be expressed.

Existing organizations working on school equity issues probably want to involve new people. All action programs require a constant influx of new energies, skills and contacts. However, existing groups may not be prepared for new people to become active leaders. Moreover, many organizations have limited themselves to a single racial group or people of a similar economic background, and have cut themselves off from others. Work on parents' concerns about desegregation or any equity issue requires a broad outlook and set of contacts.

For an existing organization to do effective work on desegregation, it needs a positive reputation with the people it will involve on this issue. Thus, it must have the ability to attract and work with people of all races and economic backgrounds and also it should have a history of effective action on school and community issues. If it has been ineffective in bringing about change in the past, it isn't a good bet now.

Exercise 2.1, on the next page, provides you with some questions to answer in assessing other parent and community organizations. Apply this

Exercise 2.1 Assessing Existing Organizations' Potentials for Working on Parents' Concerns

Areas to Investigate
and Questions to Ask

NAME OF ORGANIZATION ______________________________

Goals and Priorities in Relation to School Change	Yes	No	Comments or Examples
1. Are they working on school issues now (or planning to?)			
2. Are their concerns about equity in school similar to mine?			
3. Are they willing and able to put a major amount of time, energy and money into this work?			
Willingness to Involve New People			
4. Is their leadership willing to let people like me become involved in the work?			
5. Do they work well with people of different races and economic background?			
Reputation and Past Effectiveness			
6. Are they viewed positively by: • parents to be involved? • other relevant community organizations? • at least some of the staff of the schools?			
7. Have they been effective in getting changes to satisfy parents' needs?			

exercise to organizations such as:

- Local Parent-Teacher Associations
- Black and Hispanic groups in nearby neighborhoods
- Local political parties
- Social or fraternal clubs
- School advisory councils
- Religious groups with social action concerns

Finding the answers will require reviewing your own experience and turning to others. The process of talking to others about organizations working on community and parent concerns will help you decide whether it is best to assist an already existing group, or set out to begin a new one.

Because of the small number of effective community organizations working on desegregation, it is quite likely you will conclude that you need to begin a new group. Even if you find a good organization to work with, you may decide to play a leadership role in assisting them to develop their desegregation work. Either way, many of the same group building tasks are required.

FORMING A CORE GROUP

To begin a new organization, or to begin working on school desegregation in an existing organization, you will need to find two or three people to work with you as a core group. This is a small group with responsibility for planning, involving larger numbers of people, coordinating activities and, last but not least, shouldering a good deal of the work to be done. Without such a core group of devoted and highly committed people, it is impossible to carry out effective community work on desegregation.

Core group members should share similar concerns about the equity issues involved in school desegregation. These concerns are the foundation of their cooperation. For instance, if one person is only concerned about safety and security, and another wants to work exclusively on reducing sex discrimination among students, they won't be able to cooperate easily; they will be caught in a tug of war between competing objectives.

Core group members need to have time available to work on these issues. The core group is like a spark plug -- it needs to have high energy, be well coordinated, dependable, and capable of sparking the involvement of other people. Many people don't have this type of time or commitment. They can contribute, but not as members of the core group.

The core group should include individuals with different backgrounds and skills. This group needs to be able to understand and work with different groups of parents and community members. For some people, such a group may be the first time they have worked together with people of another race or economic status. Time will have to be taken for people to get to know one another, to trust one another, and to discover if they all have the same general concerns about schools and school desegregation. If these issues are not discussed openly, the historic separations and fears that are common in interracial groups may make work difficult later on. It is also good if core group members have some experience in planning activities to bring about change, public speaking, involving and coordinating others in a large project, searching out information and keeping track of details.

Exercise 2.2, "Identifying People For A Core Group" (p. 25), asks you to identify people you might contact to be members of a core group. If you simply contact the first persons who come to mind, it is unlikely you will get the best people for this important job. As you list names, think about the core group's responsibilities and what is required of its members. To complete this exercise, you will probably need to talk with others, and get more names.

With your completed list, you are ready to establish priorities for people to contact first. If you are working in an existing organization, talk with other members to make some decisions. As you contact people to get them to serve on the core group, take time to explain what you have in mind. Tell them the core group will work on shared concerns and a great deal of cooperative work will be required. They will need time to think the question over, since they probably won't have been thinking about school desegregation as much as you have. Having gone this far, you are already involved and committed, but others may not share your interest.

Some people will say no. If people don't have what it takes for core group membership, this is the best time to find out. Go on to other names on your list. When enough people have agreed to serve, you have completed an important step. Save your list; people who have turned you down, or people you haven't contacted, will be important resources when you need specific kinds of help later.

It is now time to call a meeting to begin work, and to see if the people you have contacted actually share similar concerns. Are they

Exercise 2.2 Identifying People for a Core Group

Kinds of parents and community people to consider:	Names of people to consider:
Friends and neighbors:	
Participants in school advivities (e.g., parent-teacher organizations, classroom volunteers, etc.):	
Volunteers active in youth activities (e.g., Scouts, "Y", sports, etc.):	
People working with youth in community organizations, religious organizations, fraternal groups, etc.:	
Parents suggested by teachers and administrators:	
Parents suggested by leaders in parent-teacher organizations:	
(Where you are working for an existing organization) People suggested by the leadership of this organization or interested members:	

prepared to work together in building an organization (or a relevant program in an existing organization) to satisfy these concerns? You have put a lot of work into finding these people and getting them to agree to work on school equity issues. Now it is time for you and the two or three others you have involved to see if this will really work, and if each member is committed to working together.

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE GROUP

The purpose of these meetings is to check to see if you have the right group of people, to establish effective procedures for working together, and to begin work. Here, members can share concerns and be sure they are held in common. Later, in a larger organization, many different people can work on many concerns under one umbrella. But at the beginning, the emphasis should be on a small group of people who can agree on what concerns them, and on what to do about it.

A sense of what to do about shared concerns is important. If parents feel what they should do is to tell the school administration about something that's wrong and, then, it will be fixed, there is hardly a need for a parent group. A parent group starts with the idea that change will not happen by itself, and that parent action, persuasion and pressure will be required.

These initial meetings also permit you and others to make an estimate of everyone's available time and energy. If people have said they are concerned but don't attend these meetings, they are not appropriate core group members. If this happens, decide with other core group members to include additional people in the group. You can share your original list; but since this is no longer "your" group, others should add names and everyone should be involved in deciding who to invite to join the group.

The times for these meetings should be convenient for everyone and should include a definite beginning and ending time. People's time is valuable! It is important that everyone attend these meetings, so they can get started on an equal footing. A convenient and comfortable location should help. Wherever the meetings are held, there should be a minimum of interruption so that people can concentrate on the flow of the meeting. Perhaps childcare or babysitting arrangements could permit more people with small children to attend.

Many procedures and skills involved in the first meetings of the core group will be used again and again as you move on to having larger public meetings and as you develop specialized committees and other small task groups. These procedures include the use of agendas, effective meeting leadership, developing good ideas, effective decisionmaking, evaluation of meetings and follow-up. They are all tools or means of insuring high member participation and satisfaction, efficient use of time, and effective problem-solving and action.

DEVELOPING AGENDAS FOR CORE GROUP MEETINGS

A meeting agenda is a well thought out plan of activities for a meeting. It takes into account who will be at the meeting and their needs, the tasks to be done and the time available for the meeting. When the agenda is understood and agreed upon by everyone attending, it is a "contract" between all the participants and can serve as a "roadmap" for where the meeting is going.

Using Figure 2.1 on the next page, develop an agenda for the first meeting of the core group. Fill out Exercise 2.3 (p. 29), which will be your agenda for the first meeting. An obvious opening item for your agenda is to go around the group and have each person introduce him or herself. The next item for the first meeting should be sharing concerns that core group members have about the local situation or local plans for change. A secondary item can be sharing information about why each person is interested and willing to be a core group member. You can use Exercise 1.2, "Checklist of Individual Concerns About Local School Desegregation" (p. 8), as a guide to begin your discussion of participants' concerns. What brought each person to the meeting? One way to use Exercise 1.3, "Assessment of Other People's Concerns (p. 9) is to provide everyone with blank copies to fill out before beginning the discussion. This allows each individual to get his or her thoughts together before the talking begins. Another way to begin is to list the issues from this exercise on a large piece of paper which everyone can see. It may be most convenient to write with a crayon or magic marker and tape the paper to a wall.

The major agenda item will allow people to learn about each other's concerns about schooling, and for the group to discover or establish common concerns. Therefore, as each person states his or her concerns, it is

Figure 2.1 Parts of an Agenda[1]

1. An Opening: Something to gather people, to concentrate their thoughts on the present, to make them recognize others' presence, and to obtain a sense of the group's energy. (Singing, silence, sharing of concerns about desegregation, etc.)

2. Agenda Review: It's a good idea to have the agenda written on large sheets of newsprint or the blackboard so that everyone can see it. By reviewing the agenda, the chairperson can give the participants a chance to modify the proposed agenda and then to contract to carry it out.

3. Main Items: If more than one item needs to be dealt with it is important to make priorities.

   a. If at all possible, start with something that can be dealt with reasonably easily. This will give the group a sense of accomplishment and energy.

   b. The more difficult or long items, or those of most pressing importance next. If there are several, plan to have quick breaks between them to restore energy and attention (don't overload).

   c. A big item might be broken into several issues and discussed one at a time to make it more manageable. Or it might be helpful to present the item with background information and clarification, then break into small groups for idea sharing and setting priorities, and then return to the main group for discussion.

   d. Finish with something short and easy to provide a sense of hope for the next time.

4. Announcements

5. Follow-Up Plans: Be clear with each other as to what tasks need to be done and who will do them. Also, set the time and place for your next meeting. Be sure a chairperson is designated.

6. Evaluation: Serves several purposes: to provide a quick opportunity for people to think through what happened, to express their feelings about the proceedings, to provide a sense of closure to the experience, and to learn to have better meetings in the future.

7. Closing: Instills a sense of gathering, affirms "groupness" and provides a feeling of ending on a good note.

Exercise 2.3 Agenda for First Core Group Meeting

	Time Allocated	Content (What will be done)	How it will be handled	
			(Who?)	(How?)
Opening				
Agenda Review				
Main Items				
Announcements				
Follow-up Plans				
Evaluation				
Closing				

helpful to make a list. If possible, this should be done with a dark crayon on a large piece of paper fastened to the wall. In this way, everyone can keep track of what has been said. After everyone has stated their concerns, the group should list the most common concerns and begin to discuss priorities.

The secondary agenda item will allow everyone to find out why people want to become involved, and what people expect from the core group. This item should be introduced by restating what the core group is and what its members are supposed to do. This can be a review of what you told people in earlier conversations when you invited them to join the core group.

During announcements, people should exchange addresses and phone numbers and let each other know about other activities involving school desegregation. If the meeting is longer than an hour, a short (ten minute) break should be scheduled. This will allow people to relax and prepare to concentrate for the balance of the meeting.

Plans for follow-up activities should be shared and everyone should know who is responsible for doing what. Be sure to set a time and place for the next meeting, and list future agenda items. You should remain chairperson for the first couple of meetings.

An evaluation should be on your agenda for the first core group meeting. What is done during this time will be explained later in this chapter.

As a closing, you might suggest that people go around the group and state in one sentence what they hope desegregation will be like. A different closing topic would be for each person to describe in one or two sentences the best thing that ever happened to them in school.

Figure 2.2 on the following page will provide you with additional ideas for using agendas in your meetings. Well-developed agendas can contribute significantly to meeting effectiveness and the satisfaction of all participants.

CHAIRING THE CORE GROUP'S MEETINGS

The chairperson performs specific activities for the entire group. He or she maintains the pace of the meeting, keeps it focused, and follows the items and schedule established on the agenda. The chairperson encourages everyone to participate and screens comments not essential to the topic of discussion.

Figure 2.2 Tips for Forming and Using Agendas[2]

1. If at all possible, plan the agenda before the meeting. This saves time, allows for more concentrated time in planning, and allows people to prepare for the meeting. Let people know the tentative agenda before the meeting so they can prepare.

2. Time should be a major consideration. Two hours is a maximum meeting time. Don't stuff the agenda. One or two major issues and one to three small items is enough. Estimate the time needed for each agenda item and put it on the agenda chart. This helps participants fit their participation to the time available.

3. Make your agenda reflect your group's priorities. Decide which items can wait until the next meeting. Decide when difficult issues will be discussed. Deal with such items after the group is warmed up, but before it is tired.

4. The first item on the agenda should be a review of the agenda. This is the time to add items if necessary, or to change the order, etc. This should be done with the full agreement of the group, as well as full understanding of the planning that has been done in preparation for the meeting. Be sure to have participants accept the proposed or amended agenda. In that way, they are agreeing to work or focus your meeting.

In the first core group meeting, you should try to gain the ideas of every core group member. Since you convened the group and are chairing its first meeting, you should avoid talking too much. Your goal should be helping the entire group to get together, which means not having it revolve around you and your decisions. It will take a couple of meetings for this to happen. At first, people will turn to you because you have been doing the planning work, and they don't know each other well. As they get to know each other, and as the group makes its own decisions, they should rely on you less. After a few meetings, you can try rotating the chair for meetings. Or, different group members can take responsibility for introducing and leading the discussion of specific agenda items. If the chairperson gets deeply involved in an item being discussed, the chair can be turned over to someone else, so that the chairperson's role doesn't get confused. When you get very involved, it is easy to lose track of time and to stop paying attention to other people's need to participate.

In planning for the first meeting, you should make a note to yourself about how you will introduce and deal with each item on the agenda. You could go back to Exercise 2.3, "Agenda for the First Core Group Meeting" (p. 29), and fill in beside each agenda item how you will introduce it, what the outcome should be, and how you plan for the group to arrive at that outcome. You should bring crayons or magic markers, paper and tape to fasten things to a wall. For at least the first meeting, you should provide a snack and initiate the rotation of this responsibility.

Figure 2.3 on the following page will provide you with other ideas about leading the initial core group meetings, as well as other meetings you will have later.

Exercise 2.4, "Checklist of Things to Do for the First Core Group meeting" (p. 34), is intended to help you prepare for your job as chairperson. This can be a difficult time because you are doing a great deal by yourself. In all likelihood, you will be nervous in bringing this group of people together. This checklist will help you be sure you are ready. It can be used for later meetings as well.

DECISIONMAKING AND LEADERSHIP IN THE CORE GROUP

From the beginning, your group will be making decisions. If you are working in an established organization, decisionmaking patterns may already be set. This won't be true if you are creating a new group. In either case, you will want the core group to attend to and agree upon the decisionmaking processes it will use. As your work grows, more people will be involved in decisionmaking. The material in this section should be of help throughout the life of your efforts.

Decisions must be made, and the group must take action, or there is no purpose to the organization. But these decisions may be made in very different ways, as Figure 2.4 (p. 35) indicates.[3] Some community activists stress the value of group-centered decisionmaking patterns. Here, larger numbers of people are involved in making decisions, and everyone's insights, needs and wisdom is likely to be used. Moreover, people involved in a decision affecting school change plans are more likely to be committed to the group

Figure 2.3 Tips for Chairpersons[4]

1. Arrange (before the meeting) to have somebody else handle each item.

2. Encourage the expression of various viewpoints -- the more important the decision, the more important it is to have all pertinent information (facts, feelings and opinions) on the table.

3. Expect differences of opinions -- when handled well they can contribute greatly to creative solutions.

4. Don't let discussion remain between two people, but ask for comments by others. After all, it is the group that needs to make the decisions and carry them out.

5. As much as possible, hold people to speaking for themselves only and to be specific when they refer to others. Not: "Some people say...", "We all know...", "They would not listen...." Even though this is scary in the beginning it will foster the building of trust in the long run.

6. Keep looking for minor points of agreement and state them -- it helps morale.

7. Encourage people to think of fresh solutions as well as to be looking for possible compromises.

8. In tense situations or when solutions are hard to reach, remember humor, affirmation, quick games of energy, etc.

9. When you test for agreement, state in question form everything that you feel participants agree upon. Be specific: "Do we agree that we'll meet Tuesday evenings for the next two months and that a chairperson be found at each meeting to function for the next one?" Do not merely refer to a previous statement, such as: "Do you all agree that we should do it the way it was just suggested?"

10. Insist on a response. Here again participants need to be conscious of making a contract with each other.

Exercise 2.4 Checklist of Things To Do for First Core Group Meeting

Check off
when
Completed

____ 1. Members have been notified of date, time and place.

____ 2. Members have been checked with to be sure they have transportation and are coming.

____ 3. Agenda has been prepared and copied onto a large sheet of paper.

____ 4. Preparation has been made for how each agenda item will be introduced, the outcome desired, and what the group will do to achieve the outcome.

____ 5. Room has been arranged for the meeting.

____ 6. Snacks have been prepared.

____ 7. Needed materials are available (paper, crayons, tape and pre-planned lists or other printed materials).

____ 8. Blank list for people to write their addresses and phone numbers is available.

(Other things you are planning for and want to be sure to do.)

____ 9. ____
____

____ 10. ____
____

____ 11. ____
____

____ 12. ____
____

Figure 2.4 Relative Merits of Various Decisionmaking Forms

Individual	Group	
A	B	C
Autocratic (one person perhaps with advice from others)	Majority (voting)	Consensus
POSITIVE	**POSITIVE**	**POSITIVE**
Fast	Most people are familiar with the process, can be used with any size group.	Better decision, promotes synthesis of ideas, elicits more commitment. All opinions are aired. Consistent with alternative ideology.
NEGATIVE	**NEGATIVE**	**NEGATIVE**
Low chance of acceptance and commitment by others.	Issues become personalized, win/lose mentality, lack of commitment by losers.	Takes a long time. Group must have basic agreement. Progress can be blocked by one person. Works best in smaller group, can end up operating on lowest common denominator.

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and to taking action on behalf of the group.

Other activists stress the value of individual-centered decisionmaking. Here, fewer people are involved in making decisions, and they usually are the experts on the concerns and programs to be dealt with. Some form of hierarchical structure and procedures guarantee the staff's accountability to a defined membership and to organizational structure.

The simplest structural form of a community-based organization is one in which a membership elects a Board of Directors, which in turn hires a staff or Executive Director to fulfill organizational needs and implement policies.[5] When there is no regular or paid staff (and all work is volunteer), and if a group is small enough so most members can attend most meetings, a hierarchy and formal Board probably are unnecessary. But even then, a clear division of labor around basic tasks and agreed upon means of decisionmaking are essential.

Whichever end of the decisionmaking continuum is preferred -- the individual or group end -- attention has to be paid to gaining the advantage of both ends, generating and using expertise and accountability on one hand, and involving large numbers of committed people on the other. Perhaps the best guide, regardless of specific structure chosen, is offered on the following page (Figure 2.5).

In the early stages, it will benefit your core group to develop the sharing and commitment inherent in developing a consensus on major decisions. Later, you may want a voting procedure as a backup means of making decisions when you can't arrive at a consensus. The danger of using voting in the early stages of the core group is that it can result in a split that would lessen members' commitment to the desegregation effort and to each other. The most important thing is that at an early meeting (probably not its first) the core group should discuss decisionmaking styles and agree on how it wants to do it.

Leadership is another important issue for the core group to consider and the total effort you are beginning. Some leaders are very dramatic, and try to impose their will on the group. Others take their lead from the group's initiatives, and try to build an agreement others can share. Inappropriate leadership styles may alienate others when their support is critical, or take up too much time and energy when quick decisions are

Figure 2.5 Guide for Decisionmaking[6]

WHAT WORKS

- Define the group that is to make the decision
- Defining when the decision is in fact made
- Separation of operational and policy decisions (operational decisions will take all the available time, if allowed)
- Consensus in groups where there is basic trust and commitment
- Delegate the decision to the smallest group that can feasibly make decisions
- Use small task forces to make decisions and have large groups ratify
- Everyone who is involved in making decisions must have adequate information
- Deal openly with interpersonal issues or they will sabotage your process
- Agreeing on what evidence will let us know if we need to reconsider decision
- Tabling the decision when necessary
- Setting a time-frame for consensus
- Agreeing on a back-up mechanism in advance

WHAT DOES NOT WORK

- Everyone taking part in every decision
- Consensus in large groups that do not basically agree or know each other
- Decisions without information
- Rubber-stamping (ceremonial ratification of all decisions)
- Avoidance, do not put off tough ideas (unless it is to let people cool off if emotions are running high)
- No problem definition, leads to everyone solving their own concept of the problem
- Decisions without clarity on implementation
- Making important decisions when tired

required. The following four styles of leadership and influence are most common in small and medium-sized community groups.[7]

1. The Autocrat: Does anyone attempt to impose his or her will or values on other group members or try to push them to support his or her decisions? Who evaluates or passes judgement on other group members? Do any members block action when it is not moving in the direction they desire? Who pushes to get the group organized?

2. The Peacemaker: Who eagerly supports other group members' decisions? Does anyone consistently try to avoid conflict or unpleasant feelings from being expressed by pouring oil on the troubled waters? Is any member typically deferential toward other group members. Do any members appear to avoid giving negative feedback, i.e., who will level only when they have positive feedback to give?

3. The Laissez-Faire Leader: Are any group members getting attention by their apparent lack of involvement in the group? Does any group member go along with group decisions without seeming to commit himself or herself one way or another? Who seems to be withdrawn and uninvolved; who does not initiate activity, participates mechanically, and only in response to another member's question?

4. The Democrat: Does anyone try to include everyone in a group decision or discussion? Who expresses his or her feelings and opinions openly and directly without evaluating or judging others? Who appears to be open to feedback and criticism from others? When feelings run high and tension mounts, which members attempt to deal with the conflict in a problem-solving way?

If a group has many tasks to perform, it may need many leaders. All leaders need followers, and probably the most important rule for good group management is not to make firm or permanent distinctions between leaders and followers. If you do, leaders may always lead and never follow, and followers may never lead but always follow. This kind of arrangement is harmful and is similar to the rigid tracking system some schools use with students. Try to develop flexible forms of group participation, and encourage different people to take leadership in tasks and areas where they have the appropriate skills and energy. In this way, group members may continue to grow and develop skills as they work together, increasing the overall power and skill of all parents concerned.

Group members may develop their own skills further while they are working for changes in the desegregation problem. This is an important consideration. In the long run, parent growth will lead to far better work on all aspects of educational equity. Therefore, many community groups have established their own leadership development programs, and have tried to encourage group members to learn and practice new skills.

It is essential that leadership in the core group be shared. This should not be your personal group or your private effort. No one person has sufficient skills or energies to assume all the leadership of such an effort. If someone tries, other individuals in the core group won't develop the needed commitment to the effort. Different individuals will be the leader for specific activities, but this leadership must be spread around to take care of the multiple activities of the group and the different skills of its members.

Developing New Ideas in a Core Group Setting

In describing the tasks to be accomplished in the first couple of core group meetings, we stated that it was important to figure out what to do about the concerns you have. Depending on the length of your meetings, and how your group develops, this will probably be a major task in your second or third core group meeting. Draw out and write down as many ideas as possible before decisions are made about specific courses of action. A good way to do this is the process of "brainstorming." This is a group procedure for establishing support in getting a wide range of ideas.

Figure 2.6 Rules for Brainstorming

1. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate. In fact some "brainstorming procedures" require that the chairperson go around the group two or three times (requiring that each person generate suggestions on each turn) before ideas can be proposed at random.

2. After an idea or question is presented there is no discussion following it. The idea is verbalized and written down by the recorder (often the co-chairperson).

3. Other group members are not allowed to support or refute an idea during the brainstorming process.

4. Every idea, no matter how "far out" it may seem at the time, is written down.

5. Brainstorms usually have a time limit (10 to 15 minutes).

6. After the brainstorm has ended, the chairperson may take the group back through the suggestions and begin to evaluate, set priorities, critique and discuss the generated material.

To gain a feel for the kind of ideas which this technique produces, take a few minutes to complete Exercise 2.5, on the following page. As an example, suppose your most important concern about desegregation is safety and in particular, safety on the playground. Put yourself in a relaxed and uncritical frame of mind and then write down the first ideas which come to your mind about what should be done to respond to your concerns. (In the exercise, we have listed two responses as a start.)

Once the ideas are listed, discussion can clarify them and determine which ones a group wants to pursue in detail. This procedure expands the boundaries of people's thinking, and gets individuals participating. It also encourages people to think out loud and to generate new ideas together.

Your core group and the eventual committees and other groupings of involved people will constantly face the challenge of generating new ideas, questions, dreams, etc. The technique of brainstorming can be used again and again. As people learn how to brainstorm, it will become easier and quicker.

EVALUATING AND FOLLOWING-UP ON MEETINGS

It is important to find out how people feel about the meeting before it ends. The chairperson, as well as members, put a lot of energy into the meeting, and they need to hear positive comments about what people think has gone well in the meeting. No matter how much preparation is done for the meeting, how skilled the chairperson is, and how involved and effective members are, there will be meetings which are obviously not spectacularly successful. Some meetings will be mediocre. Before people leave such meetings, it is essential that they describe what did not go well and make suggestions on how improvements can be made for the next meeting.

Five to ten minutes should be set aside at the end of each meeting for evaluation. You should plan to do this in your first core group meeting, and in every meeting thereafter. Everything will not have gone as you planned and you will feel a need to figure out what went wrong and how to make improvements. Getting everyone to evaluate the meeting will be a big help in answering your questions and providing ideas for what to do differently the next time.

Exercise 2.5 Sample Brainstorming Exercise

1. Major concern: Safety -- in particular, dealing with fights between black and white students in the playground.

2. Ideas about what to do:

In a relaxed and uncritical frame of mind, take a few minutes and list the first ideas that come to your mind about what should be done in the school and community to deal with this concern.

a. Have parent monitors (of all races) assist the one teacher who is the supervisor.

b. Talk about the fighting problems in the classroom -- try to understand why the children fight.

c. ____________________

d. ____________________

e. ____________________

f. ____________________

g. ____________________

h. ____________________

Exercise 2.6 (p. 43) suggests one way of setting up this kind of meeting evaluation.

Figure 2.7 Procedures for Simple Evaluation[8]

Use the chart in Exercise 2.6.

1. Under the + list positive comments, things that people felt good about.
2. Under the - list the things that could have been done better, that did not come off so well.
3. Under the Δ list specific suggestions for how things could have been improved.

Other evaluation methods include:

(A) Go around the group asking for thoughts, feelings and impressions of the meeting (make sure it is O.K. for a member to "pass" if he or she does not wish to contribute at this time);

(B) Ask for one word or short phrase reactions of members; or

(C) Prepare a written evaluation or ask members to write down their feelings and thoughts.

Things to watch for in evaluations:

(A) Don't get into arguments about whether something was in fact helpful or not -- people have a right to their own feelings. It is not necessary to work out a consensus about what was good and what was bad about the meeting.

(B) A few minutes is usually all that is needed -- don't draw it out. Try to end with a positive comment.

(C) Meetings almost invariably get better after people get used to evaluating how they function together.

At the end of each meeting, there should be a list on the wall -- done as the meeting progresses and reviewed before the meeting evaluation -- which identifies tasks to be done next and who will do them. Someone should be given the responsibility of typing or writing up this list as

Exercise 2.6 Simple Meeting Evaluation Form

Evaluative Statements and Ideas

Areas to be Given Attention	+ Positive Features	— Negative Features	△ Things to be Changed
Agenda			
Participation			
Chairperson's Role			
Tasks Accomplished			
People's Feelings			
Other:			

soon as possible. It should be duplicated and sent to all group members as a reminder of what they agreed to do and who is doing related tasks.

Sometimes this division of tasks does not work out satisfactorily. For instance, it seems most citizen participation groups, especially those concerned with schools, predominantly attract women members. What are the implications of this trend? Women who speak before school boards often are taken less seriously because they are perceived as "mere volunteers," or "frustrated wives," with nothing better to do. When predominantly male citizens' groups speak to school boards, the atmosphere often is quite different. However, a community group concerned about educational equity must be concerned about equity in its own internal operations. Racism and sexism must be avoided, and female or minority leadership should be encouraged. The fact that some people might respond more positively to a male's request or a white person's request is important information, and groups might want to consider that in deciding on tactics. But that information cannot be allowed to influence the group's own quest for fair and equal ways of operating.

Developing Parent Organizations in Desegregation

This chapter provided guidelines for building a change group to act on parents' concerns. We examined the possibility that an existing organization might be a more effective vehicle for effective action. This chapter provided information and exercises for starting and maintaining an effective parent organization. As important as organization is, it is never enough. A thoughtful program of action is also a necessary ingredient. The next chapter describes different kinds of action being taken by parents involved in school desegregation.

REFERENCES: CHAPTER 2

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2. *Ibid*., pp. 10 - 13.

3. Adapted from P. Bernstein and L. Bowers, "Democratic Organization and Management." *Communities*, Summer, 1977, p. 29.

4. Mavrolas and Crowfoot, *op. cit*., p. 12.

5. W. L. Bryan, Jr. *The NRAG Papers: A Publication of the Northern Rockies Action Group*, 2 Summer, p. 3. (9 Placer Street, Helena, Montana 59601)

6. Bernstein and Bowers, *op. cit*., p. 30.

7. Mavrolas and Crowfoot, *op. cit*., p. 7.

8. V. Coover, E. Deacon, C. Esser, and C. Moore. *Resource Manual for a Living Revolution*. Philadelphia: New Society Press, 1977, p. 79.

CHAPTER 3

PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOL DESEGREGATION

The next step in developing a change effort to attain educational equity is to consider what programs might allay your concerns about desegregation or help reach your goals. This chapter helps with planning change by providing information on practical programs to achieve peaceful and effective desegregation in different communities. We have listed many of the sources that reported these programs, so that interested readers who want more details can check the references at the end of the chapter.

Programs Dealing with Parents' Concerns in Desegregation

In Chapter 1, we outlined eight major issues likely to be of concern to parent and community groups committed to peaceful and effective desegregation. They are general concerns of people committed to all forms of educational equity but especially relevant in the midst of controversies and contests over desegregation. Here we report practical school programs that attempt to deal with such concerns and attain these goals. In some cases, school and community groups worked together to create and implement such programs. In other cases, these programs were implemented only after vigorous and sustained pressure from parents and community groups.

Safety and Security

Parental concerns about student safety and the security of school property often are highlighted during desegregation. In part, this is because the news media have helped convince many parents that violence often accompanies desegregation. In addition, parents' fears of people of other races and neighborhoods are often readily inflamed. But issues of safety, of personal injury and property damage, usually are symptomatic of other issues in the relations between community members and their schools or between students and the schools. We should not let our fears push us to treating safety and security concerns apart from all other issues. If other issues were resolved effectively, safety and security probably would disappear as major issues.

In a national study of school violence, Boesel indicates that despite personal fears, and despite media treatment, desegregation generally does not create or accompany violence and vandalism in school.[1]

> ...statistical analysis shows that a school's being under court order to desegregate is associated with only a slight increase in the amount of student violence when other factors are taken into account. It shows further that there is no consistent association between the number of students bused and school violence, controlling for other factors. Finally, there is a weak association between student violence and the recentness of initial desegregation efforts at a school.

The Safe School Study suggests some organizational factors associated with higher levels of student violence and crime.[2]

- size of the school -- the larger the more problems
- size of classes -- the larger the more problems
- student respect for teachers -- the less the more problems
- teacher attitudes toward students -- the more punative the more problems
- student feelings that teachers teach what they want to learn -- the less the more problems
- student feelings they can influence their life -- the less the more problems
- student complaints about unfair discipline -- the more the more problems
- student desire to succedd by getting good grades -- the more the less problems

This list supports two views: (1) other educational factors and other equity issues, not desegregation, per se, set the stage for school violence; (2) change efforts must deal with these underlying issues, and not merely with new technology for supervising halls, checking identification cards, locking doors, searching lockers, etc.

Whatever the causes of safety problems, parents' concerns about these issues are real and must be dealt with. In several committees, fears and anxieties were dealt with in an ongoing way by encouraging parent participation in safety-related activities. For instance, in Stamford, Connecticut, the city-wide Parent-Teachers Council had a special committee on health and bus safety as an ongoing commitment. In Berkeley, California; Santa Barbara, California; Kirkwood, Missouri; Corpus Christi, Texas; and Providence, Rhode Island; parents and some educators rode with youngsters during the first years of intra-district busing.[3]

One example of an effective safety program involving the community and school staff members is the work of the Transportation Department of the Denver Public Schools.[4] From the beginning, their desegregation effort involved the addition of special equipment, and special training programs for personnel. The program included clear communication with parents and students about the rules for dealing with misconduct on buses and at bus stops. Careful effort is made to be sure parents and guardians understand these rules and discuss these rules with students. This is done by sending the rules to each student's home at the beginning of the year and requiring that a form be completed by parents and returned to the school.

In some cases, parent groups took the initiative to deal with safety issues after they were frustrated by official responses. For instance, a report on desegregation in Corpus Christi indicated the school system's reluctance to respond to Mexican-American parents' concerns about health and fire hazards in some schools. After repeated efforts at change, the parent group instigated an inspection by the Texas State Department of Health.[5]

Some school systems and community groups have created official liaisons with local police departments, and have enlisted police help in maintaining community peace. In Newport News, Virginia, and Kalamazoo, Michigan, special programs involved law enforcement agencies in monitoring and responding to school problems before they generated major threats to students' safety.[6] Early planning for cooperative relations between parent groups, school officials, and local law enforcement agencies is a useful precaution.

Exercise 3.1 (p. 48) will help your group do problem-solving using the information just presented, using school safety as a sample problem area. Share this exercise with your group and ask them to brainstorm answers to the questions.

Educational Quality

Programs to improve the quality of education are vital if any action for equity is to be effective.[7] Bonacich and Goodman suggest that a general upgrading of schools raises some good issues on which many groups, including whites and minority group members, could agree.[8]

One focus of an improved quality of education agenda is the school curriculum. Magnet schools and alternative schools represent one educational innovation, although they often fail to increase school district desegregation. However, a report from Tulsa, Oklahoma, indicated that the innovative curriculum generated in that city's magnet schools is now spreading into other

Exercise 3.1 Safety Problem Situation for Discussion

Problem Situation

A small group of white students was taunting two black students as they got off the bus. The driver had observed this before but didn't have time or the opportunity to intervene. One night on returning his bus to the transportation depot his supervisor told him that two parents had complained to the principal who in turn had called the supervisor concerning the racial atmosphere on the bus.

(1) How might the bus driver feel? If you asked him/her why he/she felt that way what might the reply be?

(2) What are the community problems which should be dealt with to improve this situation?

Instructions for Discussion and Problem-Solving

You are a member of a school building desegregation planning committee (which includes two parents and two representatives of the teaching staff, but no bus drivers). The committee has been reading details of the above incident.

(1) Suggest what needs to happen in the local school community to avoid the sort of situation described above.

(2) Suggest school policies, training, and administrative procedures which might help avoid such a situation.

(3) Describe specific things the bus driver might do (given that the situation has occurred). Analyze what the supervisor and principal could do to support the bus driver.

schools, thus combining the best of the old structure with new innovations.[9] A coalition of white and black parents made the magnet schools possible there.

Resegregation also may occur within the desegregated school, and vigilant community groups have helped slow this trend by opposing or modifying tracking systems. Tracking, or organizing students according to some criteria of academic competence, often is advocated as a way to group students for purposes of instructional efficiency. However, such mechanisms often stand in the way of educational equity by permitting a lowering of academic standards and expectations, and a rigid labeling of students. All this makes equality more difficult to attain. When "lower" tracks also contain mostly minority or low-income students, we have resegregation that compounds prior equity problems. In Stamford, Connecticut, Dorchester County, Maryland, and in many other locations, tracking has been eliminated. Community groups raised these issues in Little Rock, Arkansas, and Kalamazoo, Michigan.[10] The elimination of school-wide tracking does not require elimination of all programs for ability grouping or special attention. Such options can be supported if they group on a desegregated basis, truly attend to students' different skills in different subjects, and are flexible enough to permit students to change tracks as their school performance alters.[11]

Other changes can be made in the instructional process, particularly the ways material is taught. Many desegregated schools are using new methods of student grouping, joint problem-solving activities in the classroom, independent learning options, non-professionals as teachers, and community placements for interested students.[12] Several other scholars report research on classroom procedures that improve the performance of minority students by having group discussions and projects that require students to share resources.[13]

Many of the programs altering curriculum, pupil assignments or instructional processes, also require changes in the composition, competencies, and/or roles of educators. For instance, in several communities, schools hired new personnel with explicit responsibility to link curriculum and processes to community groups and concerns. Other school systems encouraged staff desegregation as well as student desegregation, and insured some degree of staff racial balance. Sometimes new personnel policies or financial cutbacks have threatened minority staff positions. In several communities, parent groups have halted school officials' efforts to reduce minority staff. They also have sought to influence hiring policies. Retraining programs directed at staff members is another meaningful attempt to affect staff change.

Fairness to All Groups

A variety of multi-cultural programs generated by schools dealing with equity issues are listed in Figure 3.1 (p. 51).[14] In some schools, school and community groups have been successful in introducing multi-cultural programs and issues into the formal curriculum. Human relations classes represent one example. These courses are not solutions by themselves, but they can help in raising the racial consciousness of those involved. In Dearborn Heights, Michigan, five human relations courses are operating in the high school. They have been able to draw together community leaders, parents, teachers of other classes, and police officers within a context of formal classes and informal retreats.

When desegregation moves large numbers of students out of racially separate schools, and distributes them throughout the larger school system, it may threaten certain programs and policies important to minority groups. For instance, bilingual and bicultural programs especially important to Hispanic parents and students may be threatened by decentralization of personnel and materials. Many people feel that having a sizable number of minority students together is important because it protects the student against the feeling of being alone, or with only a few others like himself. The protection of cultural diversity requires peer support. When there are only a few minority students in a class, they may feel isolated. In Tempe, Arizona, for instance, Hispanic parents responded to this threat by forming their own school to retain their language and culture.[15] Hispanic minorities, as well as blacks and Asian-American groups, have sometimes resisted desegregation partly because it has not responded to their concerns about cultural equity. One way parents can help schools undertake multicultural programming is by reminding or pressuring officials to communicate in the local community's language. Notices of meetings for Hispanic parents should go out in Spanish.[16] In like fashion, meetings intended to appeal to various groups should respect their holidays, special events and cultural styles.

When multi-cultural issues are not dealt with, community groups of parents and students sometimes have taken matters into their own hands. In

Figure 3.1 Multi-Cultural Program Characteristics

Program Objectives:

Decreasing intergroup conflict

Appreciating different cultures

Reducing desegregation problems

Raising minorities' self-image

Increasing knowledge of different cultures

Increasing achievement of minorities

Program Activities:

Cultural programs

Multi-ethnic materials

Ethnic studies units

Student exchange programs

Academic instruction

Group discussions

Staff inservice workshops

Social activities

Parent meetings

Interaction events

Student tutoring

Serving "ethnic" food

School integration

Group counselling

Waterloo, Iowa, students protested staff racial attitudes and the subtle discrimination they experienced.[17] In Bogalusa, Louisiana, students protested what they saw as the white bias of school systems and traditions.[18]

> The school board preserved only memories of white glory in the integrated high school's trophy room, while the prizes of five black state football championships were consigned to the black YMCA... Even the former black high school's identity was erased as Central Memorial High School, named in honor of World War II black war dead, became Bogalusa East.

In addition to programming that might better meet the needs of cultural and linguistic minorities, a stress on human relations or multicultural classes can deal with white's issues and stereotypes as well. Unless the racist or unfair aspects of the school's organization are identified and altered, the benefits of desegregation and multiculturalism will wither away.

Students' Influence and Feelings

Effective action on equity issues requires many types of student participation in plan formation and program implementation.

In Boston's Hyde Park High School, students established a program to guarantee the safety of all persons in the school building. This interracial student program was run by students, parents, and several adult educators. Students received academic credit and recognition for participation in this project.[19]

Youth participation programs are important elements of all school change efforts. The National Commission on Resources for Youth, based on their extensive experience with youth participation programs, have described several elements that they see to be essential for an effective youth participation project:[20]

1. Maximize decisionmaking by the youth participants.
2. Address a need that is perceived as real by the young people.
3. Be respected by the community. Compensation and school credits are examples of concrete evidence that a project activity is taken seriously.
4. Include a learning component.
5. Offer challenge and accountability.
6. Promote maturity.
7. Offer a glimpse of options available to youth in the adult world.
8. Offer a communal experience of being interdependent with other young people and adults.

9. Provide opportunity for a working relationship between adults and youth.

These guidelines reflect both the need for students to control their activities and the need for cooperation between youth and adults.

Several communities have involved students in helping to create desegregation plans and programs. For instance, students in Hillsborough County Schools, Florida, were involved in generating a plan to desegregate the county's schools. Denver high school students have informed younger students about courses and extracurricular activities in their new schools. In Providence, high schools established biracial student committees which met with principals and teachers in order to increase minority participation and satisfaction in school.[21]

Exercise 3.2, on the following page, will help your group do problem-solving using the information on student influence and feelings.

Adequacy of Information

At all times, but especially during desegregation, good communication between parents and the school is important. Minor incidents can be blown out of proportion when people don't know what's happening at school. Even with good communication, however, people may still have different concerns, and still engage in conflict with one another.

Community groups can help improve communication by assessing parents' and youngsters' concerns. The Freedom House, of Boston, surveyed parents' concerns in the black community and reported that:[22]

> Over half of the persons interviewed indicated that their children required some type of special assistance with school-related matters. In assessing satisfaction with assistance received, the largest category of respondents indicated that they received no help with school-related needs.

The new experience accompanying desegregation may raise questions for all youngsters -- black, brown, Asian-American, native American and white. It makes sense for parents and students to state their concerns to teachers and principals directly. A sound partnership between schools and the community requires constant contact and open sharing of educators' and parents' perceptions of their youngsters' problems and achievements.

Parents also need information about the local desegregation plan and the new school environment. Parents from several school districts indicate the wisdom of providing parents with:[23]

Exercise 3.2 Developing an Orientation Program for Students

A group of your neighbors want to help their children deal with impending desegregation of the local elementary school. They also want to help orient and prepare youngsters who are transferring to another neighborhood. They want to develop a program for the summer, about two months from now.

1. How can you get in touch with interested parents from the other schools? How can you reach other parents from your school who might be interested?
2. If a group of elementary students from different schools can be organized, what should they do together? Visit the school? Visit each others' neighborhoods? Should parents meet other parents?
3. How might you approach the school administration and enlist their cooperation in this program? What kind of support would you ask them for?

> ...opportunities to become familiar with specific aspects of desegregation. Parents were able to visit their child's new school, experience a bus ride, meet parents of transferring students, and meet school personnel. Other activities have included ice cream socials, picnics, coffee klatches, door-to-door home visits and sensitivity sessions. Community organizations often give support and assistance to these endeavors.

In many communities, parent groups were active in preparing their own neighbors for desegregation.[24] The clergy was active in several cities, but in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the local Community Relations Commission played this role; in Williamsburg County, South Carolina, the NAACP led the effort; and in Corpus Christi, Texas, a coalition of mental health associations was active.

In a variety of cities, community groups organized public informational meetings.[25] Ads in newspapers, public displays in shopping malls, banks, and other prominent businesses were developed in Santa Barbara. In Kirkwood, Missouri, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, several hundred local meetings were held to discuss desegregation plans. In Corpus Christi, a cultural awareness group sponsored special meetings to prepare Spanish-speaking groups for desegregation, even though school officials refused to cooperate, saying such meetings were premature.

Reports from several school systems indicate that a rumor control system may help parents and students clear up distorted communications and reduce fears of violence. As a part of one such effort, parents and educators in Cleveland created a special telephone line to respond to rumors about local school events.[26]

Opportunities to Influence What's Happening

Several cities have established school advisory councils for parents to make contributions to school decisionmaking about equity issues. The basic idea of an advisory council is for a representative group of parents and community members to meet with and advise the local principal (and/or school staff) on matters that concern them. In order for such councils to be effective, they must be representative of the entire community including majority group and minority group parents, men and women, rich people and poor people, young and old. They also must be able to tackle a wide variety of school problems, not just ones that the local administrator wishes them to consider. Memphis, Boston, Dade County, and Los Angeles, among others, have such local councils either in operation or on the drawing board.

Some of these councils have a great deal of power; others merely provide parents with a voice. In some cases, parents felt councils were helpful in improving school decisionmaking, but in other cases their recommendations were ignored or resisted by senior school officials. In Corpus Christi, for instance, the NAACP representative (and some others) resigned from the Advisory Board because they felt it was an attempt by school district officials to delay and "delude the court and people who might think that a real effort is being made."[27] This experience raises the question of whether such boards really represent broadly-based community groups or merely well-organized top leadership groups that set overall policy.

Some parents groups interested in participating in school decisions have used collective bargaining procedures to create a peaceful and legitimate arena within which various groups can talk with one another.[28] Collective bargaining requires representatives of a parents' group to know very clearly just what parents want. Then representatives meet with representatives of other groups, or of the local school or school system, to try to come to an agreement on how to solve a local problem. In this way, parents' groups are represented in major school decisions, and have an opportunity to settle conflicts in a face-to-face meeting with school officials.

In the Boston public schools, Judge Arthur Garrity's court order provided that parent groups would be involved in selecting principals or headmasters. The City-Wide Educational Coalition subsequently published a guide for parents involved in such efforts. It is clear that many professional educators strongly resist parental involvement in the process of staff selection. Attempts to work on this issue will have to exercise caution about educators' feelings.

Exercise 3.3, on the next page, will help your group think further about parents' opportunities to influence what occurs in desegregation.

Costs and Availability of Funds

How can we have quality education and effective school desegregation if resources are distributed unequally among different school districts? Such inequality of financial resources often is at the root of many equity issues in schools. Affluent parents often wish to reserve their resources for their own children. Less affluent parents also feel their children

Exercise 3.3 Case Study for Discussion of Parental Involvement

The Case

As a parent you know that there are other parents who want to be involved in school desegregation decisions. However, the school administration has not planned any meetings, and it does not look as if they will act soon. You are concerned that further delay could cause parents to feel excluded, distrustful and angry.

Questions to be Answered

1. How could you get other parents working with your group to influence the school? If school officials agreed to a meeting, how would you get these parents to attend?

2. In this situation how would you decide on which of the several approaches to parent involvement (just described) to take?

3. If school officials did not agree to a meeting, and did not want parent involvement, what would you do?

have a right to quality education. Desegregation is mostly concerned with equalizing the resources and opportunities for white and minority youngsters. Other equity agendas seek generally to equalize these resources and opportunities for other groups.

The changes required during desegregation cost money. But money is not always the most important resource; good will, volunteer energy and commitment also go a long way. However, the availability of funds certainly can make it easier to plan and implement new programs. Parent groups working with schools can help get money from two major Federal aid to education programs. One is the Title I program of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. School districts are eligible for these funds if they have a significant proportion of children from low-income families -- a condition common to large school systems with equity problems and especially to those undergoing desegregation. A second Federal program is the Emergency School Assistance Act (ESAA), purposefully created to provide funds for new programs in districts undergoing desegregation. Funds available under the ESAA are not shared automatically with all desegregating school districts; rather districts which meet the criteria must submit proposals outlining the programs they wish to create, and money is awarded on a competitive basis for the best proposals. Inquiries directed to regional offices of the Department of Education can provide local groups with details on these programs and procedures for applying for funds. In some cases, funds can be made available directly to community groups working with schools or students in innovative desegregation programs.

Parent groups concerned about new programs can also begin to inquire into the way the local school system spends its funds. According to Cortez, Texas, Colorado and many other states require the local school board to adopt the forthcoming year's budget in a formal and open public hearing.[29] Parent groups can attend these meetings, and publicize them so other parents and concerned citizens also can attend. But even if you attend such budget hearings, how do you read a school budget and make sense out of it? It can be done. Parent groups do not have to become instant financial experts or accountants to find out how their schools spend public monies, and how much money is being spent on new programs related to the needs of desegregation.

In many situations, parent groups working for school change are supported by monies from some Federal or state agency, the school system itself, or a local foundation. Parent groups wishing to be and stay active should consider their own financial stability, and their own need to raise funds to support their activities.

Wider Community Support

Schools are connected to the surrounding community and the larger society in which we all live. It may be impossible to change schools without changing some aspects of the community or local environment. Most communities do not treat youth as full citizens; they maintain a special status for our young, a status that protects them but also denies them many of the rights and obligations natural to adults. Similarly, most communities do not treat minority group members as full citizens; they segregate them and channel them into inferior jobs, housing, etc. The school cannot alter these age-related and race-related issues by itself; parents who care must engage efforts to change the broader community. This equity agenda can proceed independently of local school desegregation programs. In most cities, local groups are already active in improving public services, demanding an end to racism, challenging red-lining practices, confronting sexism, improving the status of the poor and the physically handicapped, etc.

The development of citywide coalitions of community groups permits people concerned about many different equity issues to work together. With specific regard to schools, leaders of churches, business, labor and volunteer agencies have been involved in creating organizations such as the Coalition for Peaceful Integration in Detroit, the Prince George's County Coalition for School Desegregation, and the Involved Memphis Parents Assisting Children and Teachers.[30] Other formal coalitions of white and black parents and community groups have been organized in Tulsa and Greenville, Mississippi.[31] When white and minority parents, or parents and students, can join forces to alter the community, they may set the stage for accomplishing peaceful desegregation.

One of the important community issues affecting schooling, and especially desegregated schooling, is housing segregation. The busing of students would not have to occur if neighborhoods were desegregated, or if they were all healthy, safe and attractive. For this to occur, poorer neighborhoods must have access to monies for financing new housing and redevelopment options; and financiers and developers msut be prevented from increasing the pace of urban decay. In some cities, multiracial groups have been able to halt red-lining, thus rebuilding a spirit of neighborhood action that affects school desegregation. Anti-red-lining campaigns have begun with groups withdrawing their savings (or threatening to) from banks which do not loan mortgage or redevelopment monies in their neighborhoods. They have continued to place pressure on public agencies, such as schools, to withdraw their deposits from banks and financial institutions which are acting in ways which are frustrating to minority citizens and to peaceful school desegregation.

The Importance of Community Changes

In light of these broad community forces affecting schools, single-issue parent organizations are likely to be short-lived. In order to be effective in the community setting, parents will have to involve themselves in organizations that focus on a broad definition of equity, in and out of schools. We suggested earlier that equity in schools cannot be attained without working on equity issues in the broader community. Moreover, concerns about racial equity cannot be advanced apart from a like concern for sexual and economic equality and justice as well. Multiple issue organizations can create and carry out on-going research or action on a variety of community-school issues. For instance, organizations can work on red-lining, racism, environmental pollution, sex discrimination, jobs, and consumer issues all at once. Thus, new organizations do not have to be created every time there is a new issue of inequality in the community, and community change efforts can be carried out on a long-term basis.

Alternatives for Parent Action on Desegregation

Parents are taking a wide variety of actions to achieve their educational equity goals. This chapter has provided many examples of what parents in different regions and widely different local situations are doing, especially about desegregation. There is a great need for parent involvement, influence and sustained action if desegregation is to actually result in increased racial justice and better quality education. This chapter has provided concrete ideas of what parents can do to achieve these goals.

Exercise 3.4 (p. 62) provides a way of applying all the ideas of this chapter to your local situation.

Ideas and actions are very different. To effectively implement ideas requires careful analysis and planning. One important aspect of such preparation is developing targets and strategies for the goals and programs you want to pursue. The next chapter will provide you help in becoming more specific about what you will do to pursue your concerns.

Exercise 3.4 Reflecting on Desegregation Programs

Examine the list below. It presents a series of specific programs for change that might improve the quality and equality of local education.

1. Which of these programs seems most attractive to you?
2. How does that program relate to your high priority concerns (identified in Chapter 1)?
3. Which programs might be attractive to other members of your core group, or your organization?

- Safety
  - Deal with fears and anxieties
  - Bus monitors
  - Training of transportation staff
  - Self-defense
  - Liaison with police
- Educational Quality
  - Alternative curriculum
  - Magnet/alternative schools
  - Tracking
  - Pedagogical techniques
  - Staff balance
  - Staff retraining
- Fairness to All Groups
  - Curriculum: ethnic studies
    - human relations
  - Bilingual programs
  - Racism and sexism in: staff attitudes and actions
    - regulations and discipline
  - Cultural symbols
- Students' Influence and Feelings
  - New Roles in preparation
    - problem-solving
    - special projects
    - influences
- Adequacy of Information
  - Assess student/parent needs
  - Communication to educators
  - Inform about plan
  - Visit and observe
  - Prepare for plan
  - Rumor control
- Opportunities to Influence What's Happening
  - Advisory councils
  - Training for parents
  - Bargaining
  - Selected educational authorities

(continued)

Exercise 3.4 Reflecting on Desegregation Programs (continued)

- Costs and Availability of Funds
  - Federal funding
  - Examining school budgets
  - Funding parent organizations

- Wider Community Support
  - Coalitions
  - Housing
  - Multi-issue and single issue groups

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CHAPTER 4

TARGETS AND STRATEGIES OF CHANGE

Now that you have a core group which has identified its concerns or goals related to educational equity, you need to begin planning your change effort. To act on your concern requires a well-planned and organized effort. Although not everything you think about and plan will actually happen, you are more likely to be effective if you outline targets and strategies of change ahead of time. This chapter will familiarize you with the importance of specifying concretely what or who you are seeking to change (targets), and how to accomplish that change (strategies).

Targets of Change

As you begin to think about what needs to be done to satisfy your concerns, it is important to specify whether change needs to be made in the community, in the organization of the local school, or in specific individuals. In some instances, you will find that change needs to occur in all three target areas; but almost always, one is of primary importance.

The core group should do Exercise 4.1, "Identifying Targets of Change" (p. 67), together; however, it also can be done by an individual preparing to assist a core group. If you do this as an individual, use the concerns you identified in your first meeting. List your most important concerns in the blanks on the left. Then think (if you are doing this alone) or discuss (if you are in a group) how each concern can be best satisfied. Consider the community, the school organization and individuals and decide what must be changed in each area to satisfy your concerns.

For instance, if one of your priorities was safety and security, you might consider targets of change existing in the community (police procedures, neighborhood parent patrols, community meetings), in the school organization (teachers riding buses with children, classes devoted to discussing students' feelings about other students, student patrols), and in individuals (convincing the principal to take action, preparing teachers for new roles).

Once you have identified the target areas related to your concerns you will have to become more specific. It is not adequate to simply set out to

Exercise 4.1 Identifying Targets of Change

MAJOR AREA OF CONCERN	TARGETS OF CHANGE IN THE:		
	COMMUNITY	ORGANIZATION	INDIVIDUALS
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

change the community, for instance. Identifying specific targets requires describing precisely what in the community needs to be changed in order to satisfy your concerns. Because a community consists of physical resources (like land and money) as well as people and groups, it is essential to identify these specific targets of change. Otherwise your change effort will be scattered and confused.

To assist you in understanding and selecting targets, the rest of this chapter is devoted to describing targets often chosen by parent groups working on desegregation. Exercises are provided to assist you in applying these understandings to your own concerns and your local situation.

Targets of Community Change

Within the larger target of the community, several specific change targets stand out as important and feasible. One of these targets is the way community groups work with one another during desegregation. Desegregation requires many groups of parents, school personnel and local officials who have never before worked together to collaborate. Previously separated racial and economic groups must come into contact with one another during desegregation, bringing with them all the fear and ignorance bred by historic separation. Old information, old patterns of being in charge or being ignored and old assumptions about community life are quite likely to be challenged.

Established definitions and ideas about who is part of the community are other possible targets of change. In some communities, this may involve redrawing school boundaries so students from adjacent white and minority neighborhoods are mixed instead of being separated. In others, nothing short of including the whole metropolitan area in a single plan will achieve real desegregation. Even when people move, will black or Hispanic people be considered full and equal partners in formerly white-dominated communities and schools?

Other likely targets for change are community resources made available to the educational system. Money is important, but so is the volunteer labor of parents and community groups who can help teach new classes, monitor buses, playgrounds and lunchrooms, staff innovative field trips, expose students to various previously hidden segments of the community, etc.

As new situations develop, and as new resources become necessary, parents and community members may find themselves able to play different roles in the schools. Parents can be involved as teachers or teacher aides in school, as community resources for out-of-school student experiences, as organizers of school support groups, or as active change agents in the entire desegregation program. Schools often operate with little direct community support and involvement. Desegregation, on the other hand, highlights the need for parent resources and for new programs that involve parents more directly in school operations.

Exercise 4.2 (p. 71) is designed to help you analyze the community resources currently being used in a local school familiar to your core group. The purpose of doing the exercise is to take the ideas of resources as one type of community target and apply it to your local situation. For each of the community resources listed in the exercise, describe the extent to which it is being used in the school you are focusing on. Also, think about other community resources that are being used in this school and fill in the blanks provided.

One of the most important targets of change in any community-related change effort is who has power and the way in which that power is used. Power resting in the hands of white and affluent members of the community may or may not be used to promote the welfare of all youngsters -- including minority youngsters. Minorities seeking to influence decisions in the schools their youngsters attend will have to deal with the groups who already hold the power. Is representation open? Are groups representing all cultures involved? How are parents involved? Formerly silent or excluded groups may wish to press their desire to be represented.

Desegregation must be treated as more than a school issue alone, as a more general community problem. After all, if communities had not supported historic patterns of educational inequity, we would not still be dealing with these issues now. And if housing and employment patterns in a community had not been segregated, the schools probably would not be either. Unless special care is taken, community members will ignore those broader patterns of racial and economic inequality and injustice, and concentrate on the schools' problems. However, in the long run, educational equity will not be attained unless parallel changes are made in municipal finance, jobs, housing, social services, transportation, and other factors in the life of local communities.

There is no cookbook with easy-to-use recipes to connect parent concerns to change targets for every community and every situation. However, careful thinking, effective discussion, and planning of connections will lead you

Exercise 4.2 Community Resources Used in a Specific School

RESOURCES	Use Pattern In Your School		
	a great deal	a little	not at all
Parent volunteers in school			
Play space not owned by the schools			
Equipment and materials not owned by the schools			
Older students who can tutor younger ones			
Senior citizens volunteers			
Invited speakers at assemblies			
Supervisors of part-time student employees			
Extra monies raised by local groups			
(other)			

in the right direction. Exercise 4.3, "Analyzing the Importance of Community Targets" (p. 73), will help you apply what you have read to the analysis of the community targets which are present in your situation and which fit your desegregation concerns. Go back to Exercise 4.1 (p. 68) and choose one of the concerns for which you indicated that the community was an important target. If the community was not an important target for any of the concerns you analyzed in Exercise 4.1, select another of your core group's concerns where the community is important. Begin your work on Exercise 4.3 by doing your own analysis of the importance in your situation of the community target areas we have just described. Then add any other community targets which are important to your concern and assess the degree of importance of these targets.

It should be clear that the importance of various targets differs according to the concern being analyzed. For instance, if the concern is adequacy of information, the media will be an important target. Other concerns will make other targets more or less important.

Targets of Organizational Change

The school organization is another important target area for change during desegregation. Like most other large organizations, schools utilize bureaucratic structures and procedures to manage their internal operations. The hierarchical pyramid of most schools places the superintendent and his/her staff at the top of the organization, with the building principal and then teachers below. The organization of the school also includes supporting professional and non-professional personnel: teacher aides, counselors, custodians, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, and office personnel. These staff members have a great deal of contact with students, and serve as important links between the school and the community. Occupants of each of these positions are responsible for an explicit set of activities which are written down, but which they also practice somewhat flexibly.

The internal division of labor and roles of teachers and administrative staff members may be especially important targets for change, since substantial strain can occur in these patterns during desegregation. As desegregation occurs, new tasks need to be done. Such tasks include creating a new curriculum, finding new ways of communicating with parents, training staffs to teach differently, etc. These tasks should be assigned clearly and staff should be held responsible for performing them. The perspectives and skills of counselors, bus drivers, social workers, psychologists, and custodians

Exercise 4.3 Analyzing the Importance of Community Targets

Concern: ____________________

Community Targets	Importance of this Target for Your Concern: Very Important	Somewhat Important	Little Importance	No Importance
1. Ways community groups work with one another				
2. Who is part of the community				
3. Resources available for schools				
4. Roles of the community members				
5. Who has power and how is it used				
6. Other				
7.				

are critical to achieving equal and high quality education.

Desegregation also calls for change in the roles of parents and students. These persons have valuable ideas, skills, and commitments to contribute to the schools. The U.S. Civil Rights Commission has investigated the role of students in school desegregation:[1]

> Superintendents queried in the Commission's national survey said that a majority of students, both white and minority, supported desegregation in their districts. This was true of minority students in 72 percent of the districts and of white students in 62 percent. Furthermore, student support reportedly increased substantially after the desegregation plan was in operation. In interviews and hearing testimony these feelings were generally expressed in very personal terms relating to individual experiences. One student in Denver said:
>
>> When I first heard about going to Manual, I was... in eighth grade...and I think I might have been really scared...except my mom had been working with Mr. Ward and a lot of the kids and teachers and she knew a lot about it. And I had a lot of support from the house, my mom and older friends who are going to Manual now, and they said, "don't be scared of it, now it's really great." And I think so now.

Certainly, youth's role in desegregation, and their preparation and orientation in school, is a meaningful target for organizational change.

Organizational rules and regulations represent other change targets. Numerous researchers indicate incidents where due process is not utilized in school disciplinary cases. Inconsistent or unfair rules and regulations applied to minority youngsters are a visible form of institutional racism. Desegregation plans should take such procedures as a target of change and review and revise rules and the way they are administered. Parents can ensure that this occurs.

Exercise 4.4 (p. 75) is designed to help you examine in more depth one organizational target: rules and regulations. After reading about a typical situation involving discipline, the exercise asks you to think about and discuss those educational beliefs or practices which could create the situation described and the impacts of such a situation on groups of students.

These students' perceptions, regardless of whether they are "right," increases the tension between minority and white students or teachers. Thus, the practices that lead to this tension are appropriate and necessary targets of change that might improve the local situation.

Exercise 4.4 Making Disciplinary Practices Fair

At a local community meeting of Chicano parents, several of their high school youngsters complained about school discipline procedures. They argued that school officials punish Chicano students for breaking rules that the students don't even know about, since many of them are new to the school. Moreover, they complain that for the same infractions, Chicano students are punished more severely than are Anglos.

1. How can these parents deal with these complaints? Should they take them to the principal? Should they ask to see school records? Should they try to observe in the school? What would be evidence?

2. If these students' complaints are accurate, what is likely to be their effect on these Chicano students?

3. What attitudes of teachers and principals might lead to this situation?

4. In your own school, are there examples of rules that do not seem to be fair to different racial or cultural groups?

Closely related to school rules and regulations is another target -- the attitudes of the staff toward each other and toward the students. Many staff members themselves went to school in segregated situations. Many of them taught in schools when sexism was overt and approved, and when physically handicapped children were excluded from "regular" classes. Many spent their early years teaching in schools with students and teachers from only one race or economic class. They, too, may be unprepared for more equal forms of education, and their relationships with one another may be an important target of change efforts.

Other targets of change in the school organization include new programs which respond to such concerns as increasing the quality of education or achieving a multicultural organization. Many such concerns call for new classes and extra-curricular programs, or substantial changes in existing programs. A good diagnosis of your local situation will help you find more targets, and decide upon the best targets of change for your particular concerns.

Exercise 4.5, "Analyzing the Importance of Organizational Targets" (p. 77), will help you apply what you have read to the analysis of the organizational targets which fit your local situation and one of the desegregation concerns or goals you have chosen to work on. Go back again to Exercise 4.1 (p. 68), and choose one of the concerns for which you indicated that the school organization was an important target area. If this target area was not important to any of the concerns you developed in Exercise 4.1, you can select another of the concerns which is important to your group, and which does not require changes in the organization of the school. Begin your work on Exercise 4.5 by doing your own analysis of the organizational target areas we have described. Then add any other organizational targets which are important to your concern, given your local situation, and assess the degree of importance of these additional targets.

As the final step in this exercise, select two of the organizational targets you rated as "very important," and describe in detail some of the things you must change.

Targets for Individual Change

Desegregation will require changes in individuals. To maintain these individual changes often calls for changes in the organization of the school and the community. As a result, change in individuals is related to change

Exercise 4.5 Analyzing the Importance of Organizational Targets

Concern: ____________________

Organizational Targets	Importance of this Target to Your Concern			
	Great Importance	Some Importance	Little Importance	No Importance
1. Division of Labor and Roles				
2. Roles of Community Members and Youth				
3. Organizational Rewards				
4. Rules and Regulations				
5. Staff Attitudes				
6. New Programs				
7. Sharing School Authority				
8. Other				
9. ____________				
10. ____________				

Select Two Organizational Targets of High Importance for More Detailed Analysis

Very Important Targets	Specific Change to Make
1. ____________________	____________________
2. ____________________	____________________

in both the community and organization. We treat this as a separate target area because, obviously, it is individuals who plan and carry out change efforts.

You can identify some of the targets of individual change by thinking about those aspects of yourself and others that can be altered, and that might affect your concerns. A list might include information, opinions, and skills. Information refers to what people know about their school and community. Changes in information could include learning facts about the extent of equity problems, about what people of other races are like, about who runs the local schools and school board, about what other schools and communities are doing to solve their problems. Opinions refer to what people think and prefer about their situation. Opinion changes could include altering preferences for acting on some equity issues rather than others, for selecting certain change strategies, for working with some people rather than others, and including altering stereotypes and prejudices. Skills refer to how people act in their situation. Changes in skills could include ways of relating to others, especially people who are of a different race or social economic status, ways of getting people involved and running meetings, ways of acting for change. If you assess your own knowledge, hopes and fears, and talents, you and others can make your own list of targets of change in information, opinions and skills.

Which target of change is most appropriate -- information, opinions, or skills? Many people mistrust changes in information and opinions (attitudes) alone. It is not enough, they say, to feel or think differently, unless these new attitudes can be translated into new forms of behavior in working with others. Do changed words and ideas represent change?

A major concern of many students and parents is how to gain the skills necessary to be effective in influencing school desegregation. These groups, like many others in our society, lack basic training in how to bring about change. As "outsiders" to the school organization, students and parents must assert themselves in unfamiliar situations and sometimes work against educational resistance. This has led community groups like United Bronx Parents, Boston Community Schools, and many other groups throughout the country to offer training for parents and students.

Such training has other benefits in addition to giving people skills.

Ellen Lurie concludes that one of the school system's strongest barriers to parents' participation and influence in schools is their fear of educators.[2] Learning how to deal with the system builds confidence and helps conquer that fear.

New skills in changing the behavior of other people or organizations are very important for improving school desegregation. Some examples of these changes include: skills in collecting evidence of racism, sexism or incompetence, and in using those materials in dismissal hearings; skills in organizing a parent group to confront the school board, or to bargain effectively; skills in designing new desegregation plans that meet parents' concerns. Different groups will find different skills most suited to their own goals for school change, and therefore different training programs may have to be developed.

Exercise 4.6 (p. 80) suggests that you select one of your core group's concerns (or one of your own if you are working by yourself) which identified the individual target area for change. See the results of Exercise 4.1 (p. 68). For this concern, determine the importance of the different individual targets we have just outlined. Add other individual targets which are important. For those targets you have judged to be of high importance, go on and describe the changes you would like to achieve. For instance, if your concern is educational quality and you have judged information to be a target which is very important, describe who you want to have this information and what opinions you would like them to have in order to satisfy this concern.

Strategies of Change

Implementing your intended changes requires effective means or strategies. Strategies, like the concerns or goals and targets you have already worked on, need to fit your specific situation. To develop strategies which satisfy your desegregation concerns will require your core group to make careful choices among alternative strategies. In this chapter, we will describe two different strategies used by parents and other community members acting for educational equity. These alternatives are the strategies of consensus and conflict. Also, we will provide you with information and exercises to help your group choose and develop the strategies appropriate to your concerns.

Examples of Alternative Strategies

Consensus and conflict strategies are basic tools for bringing about

Exercise 4.6 Analyzing the Importance of Individual Targets

Concern: ______________________________

Individual Targets	Name of Person or Persons	Great Importance	Some Importance	Little Importance	No Importance
New Information					
New Opinions					
New Skills					

Select a Very Important Target and Make a Detailed Description of the Changes to be Made

Very Important Target

____

____

Specific Changes to be Made

____

____

____

____

____

change. Like all tools, they need to be used appropriately. You probably have observed these strategies in action but may not have made conscious distinctions between them. Before you decide how and when to use each strategy, we will describe the two strategies and give you examples of what's involved in each.

The consensus strategy for school change uses several forms of collaboration and cooperation to change communities, organizations and individuals. In practice, the consensus strategy assumes most people agree with one another on major concerns and issues and what should be done to alter targets. Even those people who disagree with one another should be able to collaborate effectively to work on common concerns about their schools.

Consensus and collaboration strategies assume people can work together once they identify common concerns, and that they can create trust in one another. According to this approach, parents are interested and willing to follow the lead of professional educators, and educators are committed to the goals of quality and equality in education. It assumes professional educators and citizens or community groups can and will work together effectively, and that one will not take advantage of the other. Moreover, it assumes different racial groups can and will work together effectively. Other assumptions are that the legacy of racial ignorance, fear, or hatred built up over several generations can and will be lessened or eradicated by desegregation; and that different racial and social class groups can overcome the distance and isolation that has been their heritage through contacts with one another in the school and community.

An example of the consensus strategy could be the formation of a broad-based problem-solving team to achieve the changes required by parents' concerns about the safety of students. The particular activities that could be undertaken as part of this strategy include:

1. Recruiting representatives from different groups of parents and other community members
2. Informing the school staff of the need for such teams and soliciting participation and help from them
3. Holding meetings to train the school and parent representatives to work well together and develop a working trust
4. Having the team develop a list of commonly agreed on safety concerns
5. Reaching agreement in the team on reasonable solutions to these safety concerns

6. Having school personnel and parents implement the agreed upon solutions to the safety concerns

A number of educators and community leaders have suggested another general approach to school change. The conflict approach uses or escalates a school-community conflict in order to bring about change. The conflict strategy assumes that various organizations or community groups have differing concerns, because of the race, sex, economic class, or age of their members. Although some concerns are shared across these groupings, many are not held in common, at least not in terms of opinions about what ought to be done. With regard to equity issues in school, the conflict strategy suggests that parents may not trust educational authorities to make wise teaching-learning decisions; poor people may not trust affluent people to make community policies for everyone; and racial/ethnic minorities may not trust the white majority to make wise decisions about cultural pluralism.

Based on these assumptions, the basic process utilized to make change involves confrontation, pressure and negotiations or bargaining. Groups make decisions that protect their own people and their concerns. Minority groups, poor people, and other groups with low power, must gather their resources and organize to have influence. Then, they can bargain effectively with other groups who control schools and communities.

An example of the conflict strategy would be the formation of a parents' group to achieve changes related to the safety of their children. The particular activities that could be undertaken as part of this strategy include:

1. Identifying the failures of the schools in adequately providing for student safety
2. Publicizing the schools' lack of concern about this matter and their unwillingness to give it the attention it deserves
3. Recruiting other parents who are concerned about safety and who feel that the school is not going to satisfy this concern voluntarily
4. Creating an effective group or organization of these parents capable of decisionmaking and coordinating action to plan and implement a change effort
5. Pressuring the school to carry through these actions insuring student safety

As these examples demonstrate, the two strategies differ in some important ways (see Figure 4.1 on following page).

To provide you with a more concrete comparison of these two strategies, and some of the combinations of the two which are possible, we will describe

Figure 4.1 Contrasting Consensus and Conflict Strategies

	CONSENSUS	CONFLICT
Are concerns common?	Yes	Not at first
Do people of different groups agree with each other?	Yes	No
Will educators accept changes parents want to make?	Easily	Not easily
If people disagree with parents' concerns, what change tactics will work best?	Communication, Persuasion	Confrontation, Pressure
What is the level of trust between parents' groups and target groups?	High	Low
What key skills are required?	Openness, Honesty	Gaining influence
Will educators take advantage of parent groups?	No	Yes

alternative ways of addressing a particular concern. In several communities, parent groups have taken as their target changing the school's decisionmaking structure by adding a local advisory committee. Depending on whether a consensus strategy, a conflict strategy, or a mixed approach is used, different specific actions are involved. Figure 4.2 (p. 85) describes the different actions that follow from the adoption of each strategy.

Exercise 4.7 (p. 86) is based on Figure 4.2, and requires your group to move these strategy options from the discussion table to your local situation. Doing this exercise will help your group to understand the important differences between these strategies.

Discussion of Exercise 4.7 should bring out group members' ideas about these different strategies of change. Because of differing past experiences, you can expect the people you are working with to have different feelings and skills about these strategies. To deal with your local concerns, it is important that you choose appropriate strategies. Your group needs to feel good about the strategy it will use and the strategy must be appropriate to the situation. Sometimes this will require choosing and developing a strategy which you are not comfortable with at first. To prepare to make good strategy choices, your group needs to know its members' feelings and experiences with consensus, conflict and mixed strategies.

Both strategies have been successful in helping people to act on equity issues and in bringing about change. How can you decide which to use? There is no easy answer. Often it depends on how much cooperation has occurred ahead of time between schools and local community groups. If school personnel and parents have good working relations, consensus strategies undoubtedly will work. But school persons also can use consensus and collaboration approaches to play one group of parents off against another, or to give the pretense of meaningful change. Where the school system is derelict and uncooperative, the conflict strategy will be more appropriate.

People planning for change using these alternative strategies have developed some rules of thumb concerning their applications. Figure 4.3 (p. 87) lists some advantages and drawbacks of each strategy; it is a succinct and helpful statement of guidelines for change.[3]

We have separated these two strategies since they are different approaches to making change work in schools. At times, in actual practice, it's difficult to know whether one is bargaining or collaborating, and the differences may get

Figure 4.2 Change Strategies in Relation to a Local Advisory Committee

Committee Issues and Activities	Consensus Strategy	An Example of a Mixed Strategy	Conflict Strategy
1. Committee composition	Seek members from all important parts of the community, including powerful and non-powerful groups.	Seek a diversity of members, but make sure your group's concerns will get a fair hearing.	Seek members who share your group's concerns, and who can exert enough power to control the committee and place pressure on the school.
2. Committee communications	Stress open sharing of ideas, plans and problems of all representatives.	Stress open sharing about needs and goals but not all the group's problems and resources.	Stress strategic sharing of information in order to get ideas accepted. Do not share weaknesses or problems.
3. Outside participation of other community members	Hold public hearings and keep all decisions in in the open.	Hold ample public hearings to gather information, but not necessarily open decisionmaking.	Gain public attention of your own and allies ideas but try to block opponents'. Stress decisionmaking accountability to your constituency as well as protection from enemies.
4. Decisionmaking process	Consensus of all members.	Consensus with back-up procedure of majority vote.	Voting weighted in favor of your most powerful allies.
5. Relationship with school staff	Welcome staff's interest and resources and share ideas with educational leaders.	Work with certain staff members, and be cautious about what you share with educational leaders.	Work separately from staffs and try to influence powerful educators leaders through common friends or even through threats.

Exercise 4.7 Evaluating Alternative Strategies for Developing a Local Advisory Committee

	CONSENSUS	CONFLICT	MIXED
Which strategy do you think your group would be most comfortable with?			
Which strategy would be most effective in your local situation? (i.e., result in an influential advisory committee).			

Which parent groups and educators in your community would be most likely to use which strategy?

	Consensus Strategy	Conflict Strategy	Mixed Strategy
Parent Groups			
Educators			

Figure 4.3 Consensus and Conflict Strategies: Advantages and Disadvantages

Consensus Strategy	Conflict Strategy
ADVANTAGES	
• To establish a cooperative context for action	• To counter a perceived lack of official interest in or responsiveness to grievances
• To achieve broad community support	• To encourage or force an opponent to negotiate or meet with you
• To resolve differences among individuals or groups of approximately equal power and shared values	• To resolve problems in a win-lose situation, i.e., when both sides cannot be satisfied by the final disposition
• To resolve issues when compromise is possible or when all parties can come out ahead as a result of a decision	• To equalize a power relationship if you're the weaker party
• To bring hostility out into the open to be examined, discussed, and alleviated	• To obtain or speed up action which has been delayed
	• To deal with institutions or agencies with sharply divergent viewpoints and interests
DISADVANTAGES	
• Achieving consensus can be a slow and drawn out process, during which participants and the public may lose interest	• Conflict can escalate and produce a strong reaction or "backlash" which can deter change
• Compromise may not solve the problem	• Outside organizers sometimes enter a community and manipulate aggrieved persons into using conflict strategies that are designed more to promote external "movement" goals than to resolve a community problem

fuzzy. To prevent your group from becoming confused and ineffective, clear strategy planning will have decided exactly what you are trying to achieve and your plans for achieving your objectives.

There are times a parents' group may switch from a consensus to a conflict strategy, and vice versa, but one should plan for and be conscious of the shift and its probable impact. It is not effective to keep switching back and forth in pursuit of your objectives. If you keep switching, other groups won't know what to expect of you, and may become confused or uncooperative. Such switching also confuses your own group and may make it difficult to resolve internal disagreements.

Exercise 4.8 (p. 89) will help your group analyze the situation you face and decide whether to pursue a consensus or a conflict strategy as your means of accomplishing change. Using one of your core group's key concerns, and the targets you have decided on for this concern, discuss each factor listed in the exercise, and decide, given your concern and targets, whether each factor would indicate the choice of a consensus, conflict, or mixed strategy of change. You will be assessing the current goals and relationships of your change group and other change groups to the target group as well as the past history of these relationships. You will also be drawing on the results of Exercise 4.7 (p. 86), which indicated your group's experience, feelings, and skills in relation to each of these strategy options. After you have assessed each factor, your group should decide on the overall strategy to be used. You should also note any doubts or qualifications.

Few things in nature or society can be accurately understood as a simple choice. Situations are not always pure conflict or pure consensus; there are many mixed cases -- cases where there are disagreements but not major ones, and cases where two parties are both in agreement and disagreement with one another. We do not recommend that your group rely exclusively on either the consensus or the conflict strategy. These strategies are tools, and different situations require the use of different tools. In some jobs a hammer works very well; other circumstances require more delicate tools and a hammer might damage what you are trying to build. The consensus and conflict strategies are basic tools which can be combined in many different ways to accomplish different goals. The key is for you to choose and develop a strategy appropriate to your particular concerns and situations.

Exercise 4.8 Assessing Appropriate Strategy for a Local Situation

Core Group's Key Concern: ______________________________

Targets for Acting on This Concern: ______________________________

	Which Strategy Is Most Appropriate		
	Consensus Strategy	Conflict Strategy	Mixed Strategy
Areas to Analyze			
1. Your current concern and the target group's concerns			
2. Current level of trust between your group and target group			
3. Degree of change required to alter target			
4. Past history of working relationships between change groups and targets			
5. Feelings of your change group			
6. Past experience of your change group			
7. Overall change skills of your group			

Your core group's strategy choice and any qualifications or doubts:

____

____

____

Targets and Strategies

This chapter provided an analysis of those aspects of the community, the school, and individuals which must be focused on to accomplish your goals. These targets are the specific objects of the concerns held and the actions taken by parents. Two contrasting strategies of action were described. The consensus and conflict strategies, and mixes of the two, are commonly used by parent and community groups acting for educational equity. The local situation and the preferences of people in your change group determine the specific strategy used. Hopefully, you have completed the exercises and identified the targets and strategies which fit your group's goals and your local school and community situation. Further development of your plans for change requires a great deal of information. Members of your change group may have information already but more specific material will probably be needed. The next chapter focuses on ways of getting this information.

REFERENCES: CHAPTER 4

1. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Fulfilling the Letter and Spirit of the Law: Desegregation of the Nation's Public Schools*. August 1976, pp. 246-247.

2. E. Lurie, *How to Change the Schools: A Parents' Action Handbook on How to Fight the System*. New York: Vintage Books, 1970.

3. American Association of University Women, *Tool Catalogue: Techniques and Strategies for Successful Action Programs*. Washington, D.C.: AAUW, 1972, pp. 10-11. (2401 Virginia Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037).

CHAPTER 5

WAYS OF GETTING INFORMATION

As your core group continues to plan the details of its change activites, it will need more information about the situation it faces. In this chapter, we will identify different information needs of your core group and how to gather important information.

Information Needs and the Barriers To Be Overcome

Parent groups have several different needs for information.

1. To discover your concerns and the problems in your local school and community.
2. To determine how many and which parents and school members share your core group's desegregation concerns.
3. To figure out the causes of the problems which create concern.
4. To identify what students and parents want desegregated schools to be like (how things should be different to meet their concerns).

You start with a set of concerns or problems that exist in your school. Next, your group needs to know the extent of the support for these concerns. Who else cares? It is important to know what type of people share your concerns so you can involve them in your change strategy. As we described in the last chapter, developing your change strategy requires an analysis of the causes of the problems which have given rise to your concern. To bring about change, you need to know what your parents and other supporters want the school to be like.

You can use Exercise 5.1 (p. 93) to identify your group's needs for information. As you discuss the questions in this exercise, you will need to draw on the work you have done in identifying key concerns, deciding upon targets, and thinking about a strategy. You will also need to assess what information you already have within your group, and what you need but don't have. It is important to make judgements about how badly you really need information in each of the areas described. This will allow you to establish priorities.

Information gathering and analysis done by and for parents is different

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Exercise 5.1 Identifying Your Change Group's Needs for Information

Concern Being Analyzed: ________________________________

Areas of Potential Information Needed	Assessment of Your Group's Needs
1. Information on the extent of the problems involved at your school.	no information needed — a lot of information needed Describe what, if any, information is needed ____________________ ____________________ ____________________
2. Information on who else shares your concerns.	no information needed — a lot of information needed Describe what, if any, information is needed: ____________________ ____________________ ____________________
3. Information on the causes of the problems you are concerned with.	no information needed — a lot of information needed Describe what, if any, information is needed: ____________________ ____________________ ____________________
4. Information on what others (interested parents, students and other school people) want changed to satisfy their concerns.	no information needed — a lot of information needed Describe what, if any, information is needed: ____________________ ____________________ ____________________
5. (other information your group needs) __________ ____________________ ____________________ ____________________ ____________________	no information needed — a lot of information needed Describe what information is needed: ____________________ ____________________

from most information gathering activities assigned to specialists within the school system. Professional researchers often have loyalties to educational leaders, and to their views of schooling. Moreover, research specialists generally are not responsible for deciding what to do with the information or for implementing decisions -- they just go get it. Parents acting for educational equity want information in order to help make decisions.

In meeting their information needs, parent groups typically come up against barriers. These barriers may be rooted in the group's strong impressions and in the fact that school experts usually have much more information than parents. To surmount such barriers, remember the following: *Get the facts, don't rely on impressions.* Often groups are tempted to base their actions on fragmentary information. This is dangerous because impressions are often sketchy and sometimes downright wrong. *Gather only information directly related to your most important needs.* Information gathering requires precious time and energy. It is advisable to only pursue information that is directly related to your efforts and that you know you can use. *You have a right to know what is happening in schools.* Sometimes, parents and community people are hesitant to go after information which is rightfully theirs. Sometimes, school authorities give the impression that only they should know what's happening, and that basic information about schools is none of the parents' business. *Involved parents should pursue their own concerns; don't rely too heavily on experts.* Because they have often been told that experts know all about schools, it is natural that many parents won't be as confident as they should be in their own ideas and concerns. As your group consults experts or uses some of their own information there is a danger of not maintaining and pursuing your own interests and goals in gathering information.

There is nothing magical about gathering information or doing research to aid your change strategy; it can be done fairly easily, with perhaps a little help. In the past, social scientists have made it sound like only the experts can collect and use information. For some kinds of research this is true, but for the kind of information needed by parents and students this generally is not the case. A little help from some friendly experts may be all you need to proceed with your own diagnosis. Don't be afraid to ask them for help; but also don't be afraid to go it alone if you feel you can.

Ways of Gathering Information

Now that you have identified your information needs, it is time to give attention to different ways of obtaining this information: where and how are you going to get it?

Sometimes you can get information from the community. Community agencies and the media often report what's happening in the schools. They also have information from other cities, discussing how desegregation has occurred elsewhere, and what the roles of parent groups were in different communities. Individuals in the community, such as parents, may have the information you need. Certainly, they may have extensive information about their own schools. Sometimes, influential community members, such as those serving on the school board or the city council, will have the information you want and need. This may be the case when you want to know why and how key decisions were made in the past.

Sometimes, you can get the information you want from the school system itself. The school system files reports with various state and Federal agencies, and these generally are available to the public. Minutes of board and administrative meetings are also a useful source of information. The school administration, and many principals, keep records on student achievement and suspensions. The school budget is a matter of record, as is the pattern of expenditures within any single building. Teachers and counselors within the school also may have information about the quality of education in their building, as well as the progress of students.

Figure 5.1 (p. 96) provides an example of information sources which could be pursued when your local concern is "improving educational quality." One example is provided where the purpose of information gathering is to determine the extent of concern about educational quality in relation to desegregation. A second example is provided where the purpose of information gathering is to determine the causes of problems with educational equity.

In addition to information that might be available in your local community and schools, other information is available from the state education agency, and from the U.S. Department of Education. The kinds of information usually available from these sources include:[1]

- School attendance by grade and race
- New pupils entering school
- High school graduates by age and race

Figure 5.1 Example of Where to Go for Information

MAJOR CONCERN: Educational Quality in Relation to School Desegregation

Why is information needed?		Potential Information Sources
Purpose:	Determine degree to which concern about educational quality is shared among parents, educators and students.	Community Agencies Review of newspaper articles, letters, etc. School System School system reports of problems, surveys with selected teachers and administrators Analysis of changes in policy, statements on attention given to problems Students and Parents Surveys of students and parents Parent and student discussion groups
Purpose:	Determine causes of problems with educational quality	School System Self-report of school system on problems existing prior to desegregation Surveys with different parties involved in the problem, e.g., teacher associations, administrators, etc. Students and Parents Citizen investigator panel Problem-solving groups of students, parents, teachers, and administrators Community Agencies Citizens panel investigating school finances Other Outside consultant with experience in particular problem

- Participation in national school lunch program
- Bilingual education information
- School plant data
- Language characteristics of student body
- Performance records
- Drop-out and withdrawal rates
- Number of noncertified personnel
- Professional personnel qualifications
- Vocational education, by type of participation
- ESEA program participation
- Revenues by sources, amounts
- Expenditures, by type and amount
- Bonded debt
- Expenditure of special funds

If you know where to get information, the next question is how to go about doing so. Three major approaches to systematic information gathering have been used by parent and community groups in school systems throughout the country. We will discuss, in order, observation techniques, surveys using either written questionnaires or face-to-face interviews, and the analysis of records. Some of these approaches are more suited to obtaining one kind of information rather than another. However, almost any of them can be used to get information relevant to the concerns parents have regarding their school.

Observation. Observation is probably the simplest and most natural diagnostic effort. All of us, in our daily lives, observe the world around us, either actively or passively. Once you plan to use observations as part of a change design, however, you need more systematic ways of working.

Like all methods of information gathering and analysis, observation requires forethought about what you wish to observe and how you expect to go about observing. Observation may be natural, but fair and reliable methods of observation do not always come naturally. The person attempting to observe the school can look at an enormous number of things. For instance, in observing students, one can look for: the number of youngsters that crowd around the water fountain; the number of teachers that yell at them to get out of the halls; the number of students holding hands in the halls; the extent to which students hold hands with youngsters of another race; and the list could go on and on. When you plan to observe, think carefully about what you really want to observe, and what is the best way of observing it.

You increase your sensitivity and accuracy by taking brief notes about what you see. Relying on your own memory is not adequate when you are going to use the information to create a plan for change, or to argue with other parents or educators about what should be done.

Sometimes the observer is also a participant in the situation or event being studied. For instance, a student or teacher in school may be observing hall activity, lunchroom behavior, or classroom process. While the "participant-observer" has the insider's advantage over the general observer, he or she is more likely to have a personal reaction to the situation. Thus, it may be more difficult to separate "what is seen" from "what is wanted or expected to be seen." At the same time, the fact that people who are part of a situation are invested in studying and changing it is an enormous advantage.

The Institute for Responsive Education, which has pioneered instruction in participant-observation for community persons, suggests additional guidelines:[2]

> As you gather data, observe natural and typical settings wherever possible. In general you will be trying to discover things that are "par for the course." The observers who concentrate on deviant cases leave themselves open to charges of manipulation and inaccuracy. Aim to observe a variety of typical circumstances in which the usual processes and conditions come into play. Observing a school during final exam week doesn't produce much useful information about what usually happens there. While observing it is important to be as sensitive and non-disruptive as possible, so that situations reflect reality.

On the following page, we include an observation form that has been used to help people gather information on what is happening in school buildings and classrooms.

Surveys. Surveys -- questionnaires or interviews -- are popular in the social sciences and involve face-to-face or paper and pencil responses by people to a specific set of questions. A questionnaire survey is usually conducted via the mail or in person with a form handed out to participants. An interview form of survey, on the other hand, is a face-to-face conversation where one person asks questions and the other person or persons answer them.

Figure 5.2 Sample Guide for Observing Senior High School[3]

Senior High Team Report Form

General

A. Is supervision and security adequate in all lavatories?

____

B. Is supervision and security adequate in all areas of the building and on the grounds? ______________

C. How long is the lunch period? ______________

Do students sit in racially isolated groups? ________

If there is a split class period because of lunch, does this create problems? ______________

____

Classroom Atmosphere

A. Observe for yourself how many classrooms throughout the school appear to be segregated by race or sex. Identify: ________

____

B. With the information given to you by the principal together with your own observations, do you see a pattern or specific problem of classroom segregation for other than academic needs? Specify: ______________

____

____

Classroom Observations

1. Class: ______________ 2. Period: ______________

3. Teacher: ______________________

4. Are the students pleasant toward each other? Yes: ________

No: ________ Evaluate contributing factors: ________

____

5. Do the students appear respectful toward the teacher? Yes: ___

Sometimes: ____ No: ____ Evaluate contributing factors: ___

____

6. Do teachers encourage class participation from members of all ethnic groups? ________ How do students respond? ______

____

7. Do students sit in racially, sexually, or socio-economically separate groups in the classroom? ______. If not readily apparent, how did this come about? ______________
Does it influence the teaching/learning situation? ________

In surveys, the same problem of deciding "what" and "how" to investigate arises. Sometimes one starts with a set of questions which seem important, but which turn out to be impossible for people to answer. Their answers to the questions may not make sense because the question has not been asked correctly or because real feelings and concerns are not being elicited. These problems are more likely to be encountered in the questionnaire survey, where you do not get a person's face-to-face reactions. The interview permits you to get more in-depth data and to adjust questions to the particular individual characteristics of the person being interviewed. On the other hand, interviews are much more time-consuming and costly. In creating any type of survey, questions have to be written and rewritten, tested with people and written again. You must be sure that the questions ask what is important to you in ways that people can answer.

Surveys may be used to assess general public opinion in the community. In this case, you should seek a broad and representative sample of all people in the community. Surveys also can be focused on a particular group of people, such as civic leaders, school principals, white youngsters, Hispanic parents, etc. When doing a survey usually it is feasible to contact only a small portion of the parents (teaching staff, student body, etc.) or whatever "population" you are surveying. In order to ensure that your results reflect as accurately as possible the responses you would get if you contacted the entire population, the questionnaires should be filled out by a representative sub-population: "sample." Representativeness in a sub-population is ensured by random selection from the total population you want to study.

On the following pages, we provide some examples of surveys and survey questionnaires that have been used in school desegregation situations.

Some items which focus particularly on the way school personnel view parent and community groups also could be helpful. Parents can be asked to evaluate the school's approach to them by answering the questions in Figure 5.5. Other questions may be used in a similar format to provide more detailed information on specific concerns or targets.

Records Analysis. Another method of obtaining information is from formal documents and records. There are many school and community groups that store useful records: Federal agencies, local school districts, state education agencies, teacher associations, local Chambers of Commerce, local planning agencies, banks and the like. Obviously the community and the

Figure 5.3 Sample Survey Questions For Interviewing The Principal[4]

1. Rated School Capacity ______________________________

2. Current student enrollment: _____ Approx. average class size: ____

   A. Number of students who are not in attendance who were scheduled to attend: ____________________________

   B. Ethnic composition:
   Anglo_____Black_____Hispanic_____Oriental_____Indian_____

   C. Number of classes predominantly:
   Anglo_____Black_____Hispanic_____Oriental_____Indian_____

   D. Indicate which subject areas are predominantly:
   Black: ______________________________
   Hispanic: ______________________________

3. Administrative Personnel

   A. Ethnic composition:
   Anglo_____Black_____Hispanic_____Oriental_____Indian_____

4. Teacher Personnel

   A. Ethnic composition:
   Anglo_____Black_____Hispanic_____Oriental_____Indian_____

   B. Indicate subjects minority teachers are teaching: __________
   ____

   C. Number of substitute teachers: ____________________

   D. Subjects substitute teachers are teaching: ______________
   ____

   E. Is the school lacking any teacher personnel now? ____________

5. Non-teaching staff personnel (secretary, custodian, lunchroom help, aides, etc.):

   A. Ethnic composition:
   Anglo_____Black_____Hispanic_____Oriental_____Indian_____

6. Identify serious physical plant deficiencies:
(example: lack of library facilities, counseling or lab facilities)
____
____
____
____

7. Identify serious equipment deficiencies:
(example: projectors, gym equipment, books, etc.)
____
____
____

8. Indicate principal's projections, plans and hope for the school year:
____
____

9. Approximately how many students are bused into the school? __________

   Are the buses overcrowded? _____ Number of students on each bus: ____

   Are there behavioral problems on the buses? _____ Specify and state causes where possible: ______________________________

Figure 5.4 Sample survey questions for teacher and student questionnaires or interviews.

QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS[5]

How often do you think the following happens at your school?

	Never 0	1	2	3	Almost Always 4
How often do students get into fights with each other?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
How often do students and teachers get into arguments with each other?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
How often do students of different races call each other names?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
How often do you hear of a student forcing someone to give over money or a personal possession?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
How often do you hear of a student hitting a teacher in your school?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
How often do you hear about a teacher hitting a student?	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

QUESTIONS FOR JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS[6]

For you, how true are these statements about what happens at your school?

	Not At All True 0	1	2	3	Very True 4
Students can feel free to disagree with their teachers openly.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I feel tense and fearful in school.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Some troublemakers make things seem worse than they really are.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Students are punished without knowing the reason for it.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
I can see the principal any time I want to.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Parents cause students of different backgrounds or races to hate each other.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
You need permission to do anything around here.	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

Figure 5.5 Sample Survey Questions for Parents

		Yes	No
1.	Does the principal have special times set aside to meet with parents?	☐	☐
2.	Does the principal ever attend or address meetings of local community groups?	☐	☐
	Black groups as well as white groups?	☐	☐
3.	Was the principal selected after some input or screening by parents?	☐	☐
4.	Does the P.T.A. ever criticize the school administration?	☐	☐
5.	Is the principal supported by others in the central administration?	☐	☐
6.	Does the school send out meeting notices in several languages?	☐	☐
7.	Are parent-teacher conferences held in the evenings, when working parents can attend?	☐	☐
8.	Is the administrative staff racially mixed?	☐	☐
9.	Are women part of the administrative staff?	☐	☐
10.	Do administrators "talk down" to parents or make them feel unwelcome?	☐	☐
11.	Are teacher evaluations accessible to parents?	☐	☐
12.	Do parents (or children) have a choice regarding their teachers?	☐	☐
13.	Is there concrete evidence of administrative commitment to educational equity?	☐	☐
14.	Are minority parents and white parents equally involved in school activities?	☐	☐
15.	Are parents involved in conferences regarding suspension or expulsion of their children?	☐	☐
16.	Are parents' advice or suggestions really "listened to" by school administrators?	☐	☐
17.	Are some parents involved in teaching, counseling and monitoring the school in regular ways?	☐	☐
18.	Does the administration seek parents' help in dealing with drug problems?	☐	☐
19.	Do teachers ever call parents personally to tell them how their children are doing?	☐	☐
20.	Are report cards easy to understand?	☐	☐

school are rich with potentially useful data: often the problem is knowing what information is needed, what exists, and how to find and use it.

A statewide group in Texas has developed excellent lists of information which can be of use to student and parent groups. Figure 5.6 summarizes common kinds of information desired and what sources could be used.

One common type of recorded and available data is school building enrollment figures. When broken down by the different ethnic groups present in the student body, this information can be used to develop measures of racial isolation and desegregation. The form in Figure 5.7 (p. 106) illustrates how to assemble and display this information.

Now that you have become familiar with observation, surveys and records, and have seen examples of each way of gathering information, it is time to develop your own information gathering instrument. Starting with one of the information sources, use Exercise 5.2 (p. 107) to help specific information to be obtained from that source. You need to decide which of the three means of information gathering to use, and what questions to ask. It may be helpful to scan all the previous questions and instruments in this chapters as examples.

Resistance to Information Gathering

Many organizations maintain their own security and control by preventing others from having much information about what is going on, or how they work. Even though the school is a publicly supported institution, it, too, may resist giving you the information you and your group want. If this happens, you have several alternatives.

1. Re-assess the importance of the information and decide if it is really needed. Sometimes a second thought may indicate that it really isn't necessary. In such cases, a lot of time and energy can be saved.
2. Identify any alternative sources of information. Perhaps the city council has school budget information, or perhaps the state department of education has the results of the local district's standardized testing program. The state education association or teachers' federation probably has data on local staff salaries, racial makeup and educational background. The school's permission is not needed if you want to talk with other parents or with students about their views of school; especially if parents are present.
3. If the school system remains the only source of information, perhaps other means exist for getting information without having the formal approval of the educational system. There

Figure 5.6 List of Useful Educational Information and Information Resources[7]

Educational Characteristics: This information would include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Student family information by age, race, and sex.
2. Personnel information by race, qualifications, and salaries.
3. Student enrollment by age, race and sex.
4. Student performance records, grades and test scores.
5. School facilities.
6. College entry test participation.
7. School attendance by grade, race, and sex.
8. High school graduates by age, race and sex.
9. Number of students with college plans.
10. Bilingual education enrollment.
11. Expenditure of special funds (Federal).

The primary sources of information about educational characteristics are:

1. Local school district.
2. State education agency.
3. Teacher associations.
4. U.S. Bureau of the Census population census reports.
5. U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.
6. Other data sources include local colleges and universities, local governmental agencies, and special interest research organizations.

Figure 5.7 Sample Guide for Gathering and Displaying Information from Records[8]

Measures of racial isolation can be computed from enrollment data obtained from an ethnic survey of all schools in a district. The following charts suggest how to figure the extent of racial isolation using several cut-points. In A, B and C, list those schools along with the requested figures which meet each of the three designated criteria. In D, total figures in each category are changed into proportions.

School Name	Number of Black Children	No. of Mexican-American (or use another minority)	Total Minority
A. Schools in which proportion minority exceeds total proportion of the district:			
1. ______	______	______	______
2. ______	______	______	______
3. ______	______	______	______
A. **Total Number:**	______	______	______
B. Schools in which proportion minority exceeds 50 percent of enrollment:			
1. ______	______	______	______
2. ______	______	______	______
3. ______	______	______	______
B. **Total Number:**	______	______	______
C. Schools in which proportion minority exceeds 90 percent of enrollment:			
1. ______	______	______	______
2. ______	______	______	______
3. ______	______	______	______
C. **Total Number:**	______	______	______
D. Total number enrolled in district	______	______	______
PROPORTION: (A divided by D)	______	______	______
PROPORTION: (B divided by D)	______	______	______
PROPORTION: (C divided by D)	______	______	______

Exercise 5.2 Developing an Information Gathering Instrument

Equity Concern ______________________________

Purpose of Information Gathering ______________________________

Source of Information ______________________________

Description of Information to be Gathered from the Source ____________

____

Means to be used: Observation _____ Surveys _____ Records _____

Using the following spaces, list the questions you will ask in your survey, the questions you want to answer in looking at records, or the things you want to observe. The kinds of things you will be listing depends on the means you have chosen to use.

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________
6. ______________________________
7. ______________________________
8. ______________________________
9. ______________________________
10. ______________________________
11. ______________________________
12. ______________________________
13. ______________________________
14. ______________________________
15. ______________________________
16. ______________________________

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may be a local principal prepared to help get the information needed. Don't overlook any interesting possibilities.

4. Finally, if these informal efforts fail to work, then consider taking legal action under the Freedom of Information Act to secure and make public records of importance to parents. Don't be intimidated. Many records of importance to parents can be obtained with legal help and utilization of state and Federal laws pertaining to freedom of information.

How To Use the Information Gathered

There always is a temptation to gather more information than can be understood and used. If this happens, it may drain your group's energies and resources, and frustrate everyone with the overload. It is frequently important to ask: "Is this information necessary to our goals as a change group? Will we be able to use this information?"

Now that you have gathered relevant information, analysis is the next step. An analysis consists of a review of information to make sense of it: to answer questions, derive directions for action, etc. Several parents should be involved in this step, including some individuals who gathered the information itself. In this way you can use their "feel for the situation" which comes from having actually been involved in information gathering.

If you have been trying to find out what concerns parents have about equity issues in the school, by now you probably have some completed questionnaires, some interviews with leaders of parent groups, some articles about parent groups in other school situations, and perhaps some letters or "accidental" information from teachers and students. Analysis requires tabulating the information from each of these sources: observations, questionnaires and interviews, records and articles, etc. Information from each of these sources should be summarized and integrated. The final task is to provide a useful write-up of this information to inform all members of your group of the results.

Remember that parent groups concerned about changing the school can pursue either consensus or conflict strategies in using information. For example, if your parent group entered into a collaborative relationship with school officials to revise the disciplinary code, you may have gathered information concerning parents' and students' feelings about the existing code. This survey may produce a great deal of information that is helpful and can be shared with the administration in pursuit of code revision. But

Figure 5.8 Suggestions for Tabulating Data and Presenting it in Useable Form

- Use simple tables with rows and columns representing the numbers of people who answered a question in different ways.

- Reduce lengthy answers, or multiple choice questions to yes-no form, so that tables are easier to read.

- Present percentages of people who answer in different ways.

- Report the data for the most important items or issues, not for all the questions asked.

- Use anecdotes or quotes that can help provide a flavor of the answers, and convey meaning more effectively than can numbers or percentages alone. But do not place these statements in the table; keep tables uncluttered.

- Following the tables and/or anecdotes, present your interpretation of the meaning of the data. Information does not stand alone, and brief statements indicating what you know about the school, about the desegregation plan, or about action alternatives should be shared.

- Connect several items of questions to one another to discover and share patterns in the information.

- Be sure to connect the information presented to alternative programs or actions.

what if the survey also shows that the professional staff does not abide by the code, and that some undertake very questionable disciplinary practices? Parents might not want to be open with the administration about this information. They may fear such information would unfairly focus on or threaten a few individuals, or that the administration would use the information as a reason to "cover up" the problem, or to restrict parents' access to the school.

One of the disadvantages of the ways social scientists gather and use information is that they usually share it only with school personnel. This procedure is based on the consensus strategy of change, which assumes that school leaders want to make changes and are in the best position to use the data for improvements in the school system. This may be an accurate assumption and it may not. It depends on the local situation. One alternative would be to share information openly throughout the system, with all people concerned. Another alternative would be to seek (or select) representatives from all groups, and to share information with them. They, in turn, could meet with their groups to discuss it further. Or, certain parent groups could be selected on the basis of special interest, and they could be the recipients of detailed feedback. Choices among these and other options must be considered carefully. Further exploration of your assumptions about conflict and consensus strategies will also help.

Several years ago, the authors of this handbook obtained agreement from six secondary school principals to share research data with parents, teachers and administrators alike. The principals in these schools wanted more active participation on the part of students and parents, in particular. After the team had collected data, they returned to the schools and distributed newsletters, put up posters in the hallways, using simple percentages, demonstrating how students, teachers and administrators responded to certain questions, and mailed this data to various parents in the community. They then spent two days in each school, having discussions with all the various groups concerned. Equal access to the data gave students, teachers, and parents a better footing for dealing with problems traditionally left to administrators. In some cases, discussions were fruitful, and in other cases sharing the data did not create the interest expected. But the opportunity was available for everyone -- educators and citizens -- to have access to their own school's data, to use research to plan school changes.

In some instances, information gathering will be part of an ongoing change process based on conflict strategies. In these cases, parent groups probably will want to control the information they gather. If a group has gathered detailed information on how the school system is spending its funds, and the results indicate questionable expenditures, the group may want to go to the public with this information at some strategic time. They might use this information to mobilize support for the argument that the school has the fiscal capability to spend more money on changes desired by the group.

Many parent groups need to gain experience and skills in using information to achieve changes in school desegregation. This is particularly true for parents who have not been in powerful positions in organizations and the community. Special training and practice in gathering and using information may be necessary.

Summary

This chapter has provided a way of identifying your information needs. Guidance was provided on how to identify potential information sources. Detailed information and examples of observation, surveys and records were provided as models of tools you can develop for your own situation.

With additional information, you are now in a position to make further decisions about the program of change your group will pursue. The next chapter will help you with this decisionmaking, the planning of action to implement your program of change.

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CHAPTER 6

SELECTING A CHANGE PROGRAM AND PLANNING A STRATEGY FOR CHANGE

Your core group is now in a position to decide about the program it wishes to work toward. In this chapter, we will suggest useful criteria for making those decisions and describe some techniques that should be helpful. We will also provide you with information and tools that can be of help as you put your plan into action.

Selecting Change Programs

Parent groups considering a number of alternative change programs in connection with educational equity concerns must make a choice. It may not be possible to implement all the programs that seem desirable. In order to make choices, two key questions can and should be asked: (1) Which programs fit your group's concerns and goals? (2) Which programs are feasible for your group?

Concerns and Goals

Programs should be selected that appeal to the concerns that matter most to your particular parent or community group. If students' influence and feelings are not issues most parents or community people in your group feel are important, it makes little sense to work on them, regardless of how strongly any one person may feel. Likewise, if safety and security is not a critical issue in a given community, then it is not a good basis for an active community campaign. If a group is not committed to values of fairness to all racial groups, and cares only about reading and other achievement scores, then the program selected should be concerned with educational equality in achievement.

To make sure programs fit the concerns of your group, it is important to assess these concerns clearly. In Chapter 5, we suggested that an assessment of the concerns of parents and students in a given school or community might lead to discovering what issues matter most to them. Perhaps a meeting or two could be called, at which the degree of community interest in a particular program, or series of programs, could be tested. The meeting could be composed only of parents, or of parents and representatives of other interested parties. In this way, the concerns of parents, of other active community groups, or relevant social agencies, and of the broader public can also play a role in program selection.

The emphasis on developing programs that fit with the current concerns of community groups may lead to a change in these concerns. In the long run, we hope community groups will become involved in all of the issues noted in Chapter 1, and in generating many of the programs described in Chapter 3. But action must start where peoples' minds and hearts are, not where some outsider's notions about educational change point. You and other leaders of parent groups should think about ways to raise the level of concern on various issues, and to help parents advocate all programs that might attain equity and improve the education of their children.

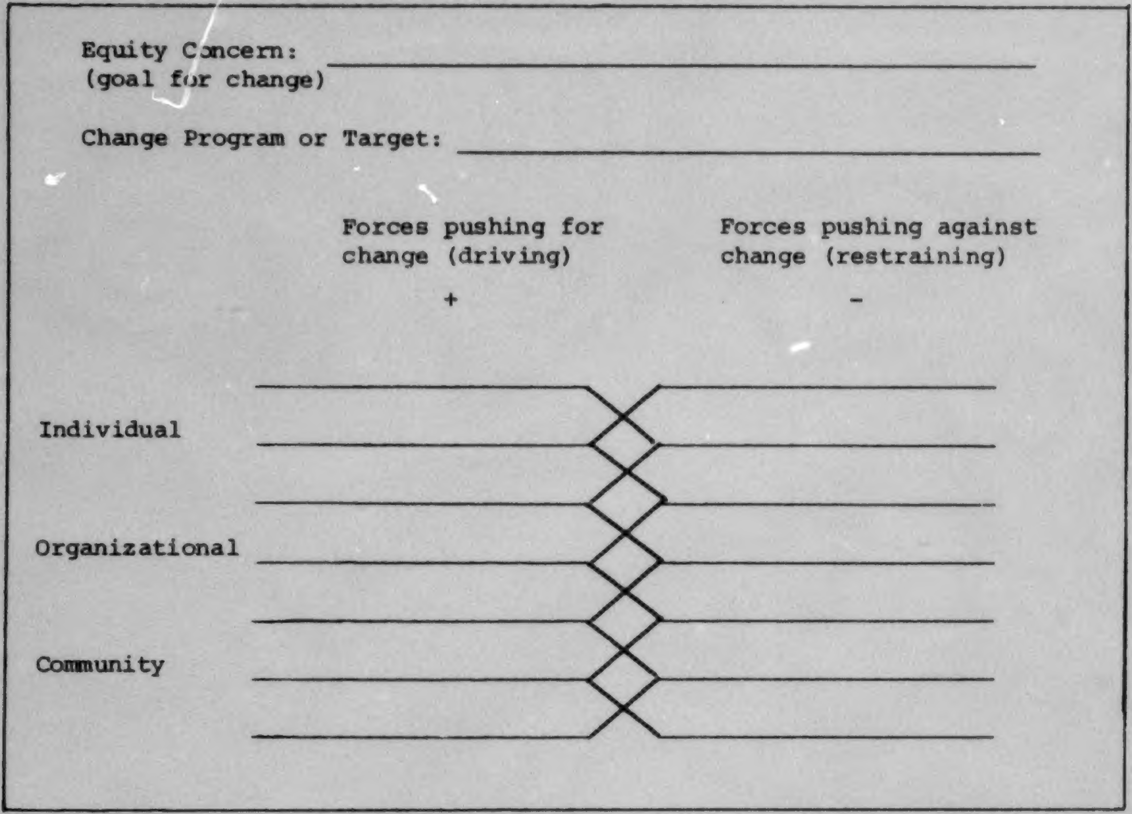
Feasibility

Your group must also decide which programs may be feasible to carry out. Several steps are involved in this process, including your group's assessment of its own resources -- skills, money, power, etc. -- and of the situation.

One simple tool that can help assess the feasibility of change plans is called "Force Field Analysis." It is used to figure out what aspects of your situation are pushing for change and what aspects are pushing for stability. This tool also guides you in identifying potential barriers as well as resources for achieving your objectives. Thus, it can be used to develop the steps in your program for change. In the following diagram, your concern, described as a "goal for change," would be listed at the top. The specific change program or target you want to analyze is listed right below. Spaces for the forces pushing for change are provided in the left hand column. These are called "driving" forces. Space for forces working against change are provided in the right hand column. These are sometimes called the "restraining" forces. Together, these make up the "force field" surrounding your goal or objective. Some of the forces may be within the individual, in the organization, or in the community (in Chapter 4 we discussed a variety of targets and forces at each of these levels).

Let's assume that your goal is to improve the quality of education for specific groups or for all students. The personality of the local administrator, the human relations officer, and fears or needs of leaders of parent groups, are examples of individual forces that may be pushing for or against

Figure 6.1 Force Field Analysis


Equity Concern:
(goal for change)
Change Program or Target:
Forces pushing for change (driving)
Forces pushing against change (restraining)
+
-
Individual
Organizational
Community

change. The way a local school is structured so that teachers, students, and the community members have little to say about what goes on in school is an example of an organizational force working against change. Small groups of teachers or students organized either for or against action of a certain kind are further examples of organizational forces. One example of a community force pushing against educational equity in a particular school building is the community's legacy of racism or sexism.

In doing such an analysis it is important to be thorough in identifying all relevant individual, organizational, and community forces impacting the goal for change. The next step is to select those forces that have the strongest impact on the change goal; draw a circle around them. This will help in directing attention to major forces affecting the goal. Each of these forces should be examined in terms of the feasibility of altering them. In working on this matter of feasibility, it is necessary to use information on the local situation and information about the resources of the change group. When forces that are most easily altered have been identified, then the change group can plan strategies and specific activities for accomplishing these changes.

As the change group considers which individual, organizational, and community forces to try to change, it will have to make choices among forces pushing toward the desired change and forces against this change. It is important to concentrate on ways of reducing the forces that are acting against change. It is also desirable to increase the existing forces pushing toward your desired change and to develop additional such forces. For example, a plan to alter a specific force field regarding local school desegregation might include:

Positive forces that can be strengthened:

- Superintendent's continuing public commitment to quality education
- Media campaign to stress positive advantages of certain multicultural programs in the curriculum

Negative forces that can be lessened:

- Exclusion of parents from planning out-of-school programs (by including them in planning meetings)
- A principal (or assistant) who has subtly supported unequal education and behaved in obviously racist ways (by confronting or removing him/her)

Potential positive forces that can be added:

- Court action mandating immediate desegregation
- Federal funds for a bilingual middle school program

Figure 6.2 (p. 117) provides several more examples.

Perhaps some forces have the potential to alter one another, as in the case of board policies or teacher groups aligned on either side of the midline (see the connecting lines in Figure 6.2). Can they be influenced to move more to the positive side? Perhaps some negative forces can be reduced via other rewards, such as a reduced workload or more security. Perhaps positive forces, such as support from powerful elements in the community, can be added to tip the balance. Speculation about ways of altering the alignment and strength of various forces is the beginning of a coherent and systematic plan. Detailed planning of this sort insures more realistic change efforts later.

With this background information on force field analysis, the next step is for your group to do such an analysis for your own primary concerns. Exercise 6.1 (p. 118) provides the framework for your analysis.

Figure 6.2 Examples of Force Field Analyses

Equity concern: Fairness to All Racial Groups

Change program: Reduce Staff Racism

Forces pushing for change	Forces pushing against change
1. Student dissatisfaction	
2. Student reports of incidents	
3. Board policy against discrimination -----------------	7. Board discussions are private
4. Some parents very concerned ----	8. Some parents don't believe it exists
5. Some teachers are concerned ----	9. Teachers union resists intrusion
6. Assistant principal wants to help	10. Teachers might retaliate
	11. Community covertly supports racism
	12. Principal's fear of change

Equity concern: Safety and Security

Change program: Place Parents as Safety Monitors on Buses

Forces pushing for change	Forces pushing against change
	7. Insurance doesn't cover non-employees
	8. No money to hire more people
1. Some volunteers can be found ---	9. Parents can't afford to volunteer
2. Bus drivers need help ---------	10. Bus drivers don't want visitors
3. Older students want to ride and supervise younger ones	11. Some parents have been attacked by youth on city buses
4. Teachers support it	
5. Principal likes the idea ------	12. Principal feels community leaders of the program are too negative
6. The media report this has worked in other cities	

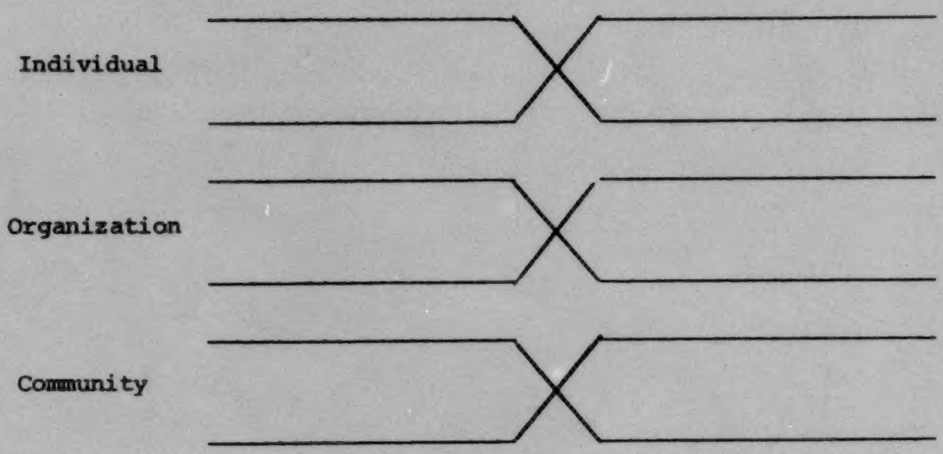
Exercise 6.1 Force Field Analysis of Primary Equity Concern

Primary Concern: ______________________________
(goal for change)

Change Program or Targets: ____________________

Forces Pushing For Change +

Forces Pushing Against Change -


Individual
Organization
Community

After completing your own force field diagram, identify which forces you will alter, or which new forces you will add to the situation. What resources do you have to use to alter the forces which you have identified? Some of these resources will be possessed by organizations with which your group or its members are affiliated. Individuals in your change group also need to assess their own personal resources. Exercise 6.2 (p. 120) provides you with a listing of individual resources and a framework for assessing them. In using this exercise, it is important that members first fill it out individually, and then each person share the results with the group. This will help people understand what they can expect from each other, and what are the total resources available for change in your group.

As your group assesses its resources and applies its resources to altering the force field, you should also consider varying your means of making changes and of achieving your goals. Examination of alternative strategies automatically leads you to a review of the consensus or conflict strategies, or some mix of the two. Before coming to a decision, be sure to review the advantages and disadvantages of consensus and conflict strategies (see page 87). Also, use the results of Exercise 4.8 (p. 89) where you assessed the appropriateness of a variety of strategies in relation to different features of your local situation.

As you make your decision on the means of altering your force field, and thus achieving your goal(s), be sure to focus on feasibility. Choose actions your group can accomplish. Wherever possible, conserve the resources of your group; select means which will work but will not require too great a share of your group's energy.

Use Exercise 6.3 (p. 121) to record your decisions about how you will modify your force field.

With the list of actions you developed in Exercise 6.3, you are ready for more detailed planning for implementation.

Stages in the Process of Creating Change

Your attempt to make changes in your school or community, whether by a consensus, conflict or mixed strategy, will be aided by your thinking about a general sequence of activities. Most change efforts, regardless of their approach, have a basic flow; it will be important to adapt this flow or sequence of activities to the strategy utilized in your own situation. By the time you and your group have gotten to this point in the change process, you

Exercise 6.2 Assessing Individual Resources and Skills

Personal Skills and Resources	Fully Developed and Can Be Used	Need to be Developed
Experience in the community		
Sense of racial identity		
Interpersonal relations skills		
Ability to lead meetings		
Money		
Energy		
Faith		
Style compatible with change		
Willingness to take risks		
Support from family and friends		
Friends with influence		
Expertise in specific equity issues		
Bargaining skills		
Good connections with school leaders		
Information gathering skills		
Ideas about good activities for change		

Exercise 6.3 Using Results of Force Field Analysis to Assist in Developing Strategy

List forces you will change or add (based on analysis in Exercise 6.1)

Forces Pushing for Change	Forces Pushing Against Change
____________________	____________________
____________________	____________________
____________________	____________________
____________________	____________________

Analyze the above changes in the forces present in your situation. Do they fit the:

_____ Consensus Strategy _____ Conflict Strategy _____ Mixed Strategy

Given what you have learned from Chapter 4 about these strategies, and what you have learned from this analysis of changes you intend to make, list additional actions which must be taken to fully develop your strategy:

1. ____

2. ____

3. ____

4. ____

5. ____

have already done five things: identified a concern or set of concerns about your schools; formed a core group; selected some targets and thought about programs for change; gathered information; and decided to use one or the other of the major strategies. What happens next?

Educators, social scientists and citizens working with the consensus change strategy have suggested a four-stage process for collaborative problem-solving. Figure 6.3 (p. 123) summarizes this process. Since the first stage has been completed, the next task is to organize teams and prepare for problem-solving.

The second stage involves several steps. Mixed problem-solving teams need to be created. They should be composed of people representing different organizational interests, statuses, races, sexes, social classes, ages, etc. These teams need to do problem analysis or diagnosis not only to document the problems' existence, but also to indicate the causes of these problems. Collaboratively, the teams develop and evaluate alternative solutions to problems.

The third stage involves informing and persuading decisionmakers to implement the work of the problem-solving teams. As a result of these actions, decisionmakers will implement the programs. The fourth stage involves follow-up to evaluate the progress and impact of the programs.

Working with the conflict strategy suggests four different stages in the development of influence and power. These stages are summarized in Figure 6.4 (p. 124). In some ways, this process is similar to the collaborative problem-solving process used in the consensus strategy, but many of the steps within the stages differ considerably. As before, we assume the first stage has been completed already. What next?

The second stage involves organizing interest groups and their preparation for conflict. This stage begins with the organization of a power base from which change efforts can be undertaken. The conflict strategy generally assumes that those groups with more power decide the outcomes of any change process. Thus, organizing efforts must be made to gather resources and develop power. Analysis is made of the barriers to change, and of the resources the group has to create change. To do this requires identifying and analyzing the major actors, and their roles and concerns in the local school. Once this analysis is done, the interest groups can select and set priorities for their change program.

At the third stage, the emphasis is on pressuring decisionmakers to accept the group's program. This requires the exercise of power and perhaps

Figure 6.3 Four Stage Process for a Consensus Strategy

Overall Stages		Detailed Steps
Stage 1	Develop Core Group Goals and Strategy	• Identify Concern(s) • Form Core Group • Select Goals and Targets • Select Consensus Strategy • Gather Information • Create Problem-Solving Teams of People from Different Groups and Interests
Stage 2	Organizing Teams and Preparing for Problem-Solving	• Teams Analyze Problems • Teams Collaborate to Develop Alternative Programs • Teams Evaluate Alternatives
Stage 3	Informing and Persuading Decisionmakers	• Teams Inform and Persuade Decisionmakers • Decisionmakers Implement Program
Stage 4	Follow-Up	• Evaluate Outcomes

Figure 6.4 Four Stage Process for a Conflict Strategy

Overall Steps		Detailed Steps
Stage 1	Develop Core Group, Goals and Strategies	• Identify Concern(s) • Form Core Group • Select Goals and Targets • Select Conflict Strategy • Gather Information
Stage 2	Organizing Interest Group and Preparing for Conflict	• Organize Power Base Among People with Common Interests • Interest Group Diagnoses Situation and Barriers and Resources • Interest Group Sets Priorities for Programs
Stage 3	Pressuring Decisionmakers	• Interest Group Exercises Power to Support New Program • Enter Bargaining and Negotiation for Designed Program • Decisionmakers Implement Program
Stage 4	Follow-Up	• Monitor Implementation and Its Impacts

the use of bargaining to arrive at a negotiated settlement satisfying to the group.

The fourth stage focuses on follow-up. In the conflict strategy, this involves monitoring the implementation of the change program and investigating its impacts. This is done to insure continued vigilance with regard to program outcomes.

Planning for Implementation

You have already completed stage one of the process for creating change. You have a core group which has selected a program of change (with detailed targets and strategy). You have become familiar with the other three stages of the process of creating change. You are now ready to decide what must be done to implement your change strategy. Each person should know who has major responsibility for various tasks, and the time by which each task must be completed.

You need to plan what to do during Stages 2 through 4 of your change process. These stages include:

2. Organizing and Preparing for Action. Whatever changes you are aiming to achieve, and whatever your strategy, organizing and action will be required. Actions will include things like collaborative problem-solving, designing and circulating petitions, preparing for a lawsuit, etc. At this stage, you need to work with a larger group of people than those that helped design the strategy. You may need to expand your resources, then form new committees by informing and stimulating people in large public meetings. In effect, you will be enlarging your core group to get the people/resources you need.

3. Informing and Persuading or Pressuring Authorities (School Decision-makers) to Implement Changes. All change efforts of parents working on school equity issues build up to efforts to impact decisionmakers and sometimes those who implement decisions. The way this is done varies a good deal depending on the situation and the strategy that is selected by the parent or community group.

Sometimes, a plan for change calls for total implementation by the school, and at other times it involves parents and other community members. Your strategy will depend on how you perceive yourself and the others who should be properly involved. The exact pattern of activities for your group at this stage depends on your goals and what you have worked out with school authorities.

4. Follow-Up. After your group has taken action, it is important to find out whether changes have actually occurred and whether your goals have been met. Change is not simply a case of school authorities agreeing to new directions. The authorities may not have the will or capacity to make these decisions work. Even if they do, new conditions may arise which arouse new parent concerns, and the need for continuing involvement in school change.

Figure 6.5 (p. 127) is an example of the draft of a plan for parent implementation of a program for change. Notice that the major tasks to be done at each stage have been identified and briefly described. Also, a proposed date of completion has been set for each major step. This date was arrived at through core group discussion, and by estimating how long it would take to do each activity. The planned activities directly follow from the processes of change we described earlier in this chapter.

To complete your plan, it will now be necessary to specify who will do each activity and the date by which it will be completed. This includes identifying who will check to see that the activities are being completed and who will initiate adjustments as problems arise. The coordination of responsibilities will probably be handled by a member of the core group. Eventually, school personnel may take on the responsibility for conducting the change effort.

Exercise 6.4 (p. 128) asks your group to develop its draft plan. You can use Figure 6.5 as a model and Figures 6.3 and 6.4 as sources of ideas for your particular stragegy. This will require more work and discussion than many of the earlier exercises. You will probably want to review this chapter thoroughly, before developing your plan. You might want to have two of your members give some detailed thought to this before the core group meets to react to their ideas and make decisions. It is important that your draft plan be well done. After it has been finished, it should be used regularly by the core group to check progress. As conditions change, it may be necessary to alter your plan. These alterations may be minor, like a change of dates involving a delay of a week, or they may be major, involving a shift in stragegy because desired cooperation was blocked.

From Selecting a Change Program to Implementation

This chapter began by assisting you in selecting a change program that fits your group's concerns and seemed feasible to implement. Force field analysis was described as a tool to use for this decisionmaking and subsequent

Figure 6.5 Example of a Plan for Implementation

Equity Concern: Safety and security of students

Program for Change: Better supervision of buses and after-school activities

Strategy and Targets: Consensus Strategy: Targets include administrative decisions, school rules, changes in staff roles, involvement of parents in schools, and attitudes of students.

Preliminary Work:	Organizing/Preparing for Action	Persuading or Pressuring Authorities to Implement Change	Follow-Up
A five person core group has been working for two months and is ready to implement the above program, strategy and targets.	Hold public meetings to gather support and volunteers.	Express preferences to parents' task force representatives.	Find volunteers to work on evaluation.
	Prepare list of qualified people to be on a task force on safety.	Express views to other members of the task force backing up the views of parent representatives.	Work with school district's research office to conduct evaluation.
	Request superintendent to appoint a task force on school safety.	Help administrators conduct a trial run.	Help report results to parent groups.
	Gather information for task force representatives on problems of school safety.	Help evaluate the trial run.	Help administration plan revisions or next steps.
	Get media coverage of parents' roles on task force.	Help administrators communicate the new plan to all parents.	
Estimated Completion Date:	2 months from now	4 months from now	9 months from now

Exercise 6.4 Plan for Implementation of a Change Program

Program of Change: ______________________________

Strategy and Targets: ______________________________

____

Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:	Stage 4:
Developing Core Group Goals and Strategies	Organizing Preparing for Action	Persuading or Pressuring Authorities	Follow-Up
1. ____________	1. ____________	1. ____________	1. ____________
2. ____________	2. ____________	2. ____________	2. ____________
3. ____________	3. ____________	3. ____________	3. ____________
4. ____________	4. ____________	4. ____________	4. ____________
5. ____________	5. ____________	5. ____________	5. ____________

Estimated completion date:

____________	____________	____________	____________

planning. Information was provided to explain what occurs during the change process. This was the basis of preparing a draft plan of what has to be done to implement your change program. Examples and exercises were provided at each step. To carry out your draft plan you will need information about the different actions involved. Chapters 7, 8 and 9 will provide some of that information.

CHAPTER 7

MAKING CHANGES THROUGH CONSENSUS AND COLLABORATION

Your group's information gathering and planning have resulted in the selection of specific change targets and strategies, and an overall program to satisfy your educational equity concerns. From here on, you want to be sure your plans are carried out or implemented. These implementation activities require information and skills as well as planning and hard work.

This chapter describes actions which often are used in implementing consensus strategies and mixed strategies of change. We will describe means by which you can ensure effective problem-solving groups. Guidelines in conducting public meetings will be provided. Numerous specific activities to inform, appeal to, and persuade others will be described. Try these on for size, recognizing that some may not fit your group, its capacities or its action strategy. No two groups will operate in exactly the same manner. Look through what we describe and select what seems like it would work for you.

Effective Group Problem-Solving

In building your change group you have already gained important experience in planning change. Now you may have to form additional groups and become part of other committees and task forces.

If your group's change strategy involves elements of a consensus strategy, you will be establishing or contributing to problem-solving committees set up by school officials. School officials often are concerned with educational equity issues and sometimes want parent groups to cooperate with them to carry out changes. Such cooperative groups will bring together people who don't know each other and who have different experiences with schools. Some group members probably will be teachers, administrators, and students, while others will be parents and other community members. As such groups begin to function, it is important that they use agendas, chairpeople, brainstorming, decisionmaking, and evaluation tools such as those described in Chapter 2. You may want to go back and review Chapter 2, or share parts of it with them. Members of your core group, or other people familiar with these tools, will need to introduce them as valuable skills and demonstrate their usefulness. But you can't assume others will be familiar with these tools or will be willing to use them. It is important that new groups take time to discuss and agree on how they will operate -- including how they will make decisions.

Other tools that can make problem-solving groups more effective are skills in group process and use of a "process observer." The skill of group process involves understanding what is happening between group members while the group is working on its central task. Please see Figure 7.1 (p. 132) for a review of some aspects of group process.

Exercise 7.1 (p. 133) asks you to think about a group you are familiar with (but not necessarily your own change group), and answer some of the questions from Figure 7.1. This exercise will help you apply information about group processes to a real situation. The school board would be a good group to observe -- then you could be gathering information while you are learning how groups work.

From time to time, any group can benefit from having one of its members, or someone else, observe it and provide information on what has been observed. Some groups prefer not to make a specific assignment of this sort to one individual. They prefer to stress the ability of every group member to be a process observer while they are working on group tasks. As long as members have this ability, and it does not detract from the group's primary task, it may be as successful as assigning the job to one person. Figure 7.2 (p. 134) contains instructions for a process observer.

Conducting Public Meetings

Groups planning changes and new programs to improve school desegregation often decide to hold public meetings. This should happen when your core group decides it wants to inform other people about what's going on. Or, it can happen when you need a larger group of parents and community members to help work on satisfying your equity concerns. It is then time to invite others to join in a broad change effort. Your core group should be very clear about the goals and objectives it has for such a meeting. Such meetings can be very valuable if they are well-planned and well-run. Otherwise, they can detract from your change efforts.

Your core group should take time and brainstorm some agenda items to be discussed. Questions that might be asked in planning for the first meeting

Figure 7.1 Questions to Answer to Become More Aware of Group Processes

Participation

One indication of involvement is verbal participation. Look for differences in the amount of participation among members.

1. Who are the high participators?
2. Who are the low participators?
3. Do you see any shifts in participation, e.g., highs become quiet; lows suddenly become talkative. Do you see a possible reason for this in the group's interaction?
4. How are the silent people treated? How is their silence interpreted? Consent? Disagreement? Disinterest? Fear? etc.
5. Who talks to whom? Do you see any reason for this in the group's interactions?
6. Who keeps the ball rolling? Why? Do you see any reason for this in the group's interaction?

Membership

A major concern for group members is the degree of acceptance or inclusion in the group. Different patterns of interaction may develop in the group which give clues to the degree and kind of membership.

1. Is there any sub-grouping? Sometimes two or three members may consistently agree and support each other or consistently disagree and oppose one another.
2. Do some people seem to be "outside" the group? Do some members seem to be "in"? How are those "outsiders" treated?
3. Do some members move in and out of the group, e.g., lean forward or backward in their chairs or move their chairs in and out? Under what conditions do they come in or move out?

Exercise 7.1 Becoming Aware of Group Processes

Identify a group that you have recently participated in or observed.

Name of the group you will use for this exercise: ____________________

____

1. Who participates most in the group? ____________________________

   ____

2. Who participates least in this group? __________________________

   ____

3. Who, most often, suggests what steps the group should take

   next? ____

   ____

4. Are there any subgroups (people who frequently talk to each other or agree with each other)?

   YES ________ NO ______

   If yes, who is in this subgroup? ________________________________

   ____

Figure 7.2 Instructions for a Process Observer[1]

While functioning as a process observer be careful not to get involved in the task of the group. A notepad for short notations will help you to be accurate. Remember to notice helpful suggestions or procedures that moved the group forward. Once a group has a sense of its strengths, it is easier to consider the need for improvements. Here are some specific things you might look for:

1. What was the general atmosphere in which the group worked?
2. How were decisions made?
3. If there was any conflict, how was it handled?
4. Did everybody participate? Were there procedures that encouraged participation?
5. How well did the group members relate to each other?
6. Were there recognized leaders within the group?
7. How did the group interact with the facilitator?
8. Were there differences between male and female participation?
9. Were there differences between black and white and Hispanic participation?

When you are acting as a process observer (whether appointed or not) pay specific attention to the patterns of participation (an easy device would be to keep score on paper). In a small group, a mark can be made next to a person's name every time he/she speaks. If you are looking for differences in participation patterns between categories of people, such as male-female, black-white, new member-old member, etc., keeping track of the number of comments from each category is enough.

In giving feedback to the group, try to be matter-of-fact and specific so that people do not get defensive and can know exactly what you are talking about. Again, remember to mention the strengths you observed in the group.

If you take it upon yourself to function as a process observer without checking it with the group beforehand, be prepared for some hostility. Your contribution may turn out to be very valuable, but a lot of tact and sensitivity is called for.

are: What is to be accomplished at this first meeting? What specific things should people do when they leave? How are people going to organize themselves in order to be effective? How can people quickly get acquainted with each other? What are people's reasons for attending this meeting? Figure 7.3 (p. 136) provides some tips for your first public meeting. It is particularly important that you plan carefully for the first such meeting you hold. Exercise 7.2 (p. 137) provides a blank planning sheet for this first meeting.

Since your group is concerned about equity and issues of racial, sexual and socio-economic relations in school, it is especially important that you pay attention to these kinds of issues in your group and at group meetings. Is leadership of meetings shared between members of all racial groups? Are parents of all racial and economic groups active participants in your core group? Are men and women equally active in speaking? Are the concerns and program priorities of all groups given equal or fair attention? Do you discuss these issues among yourselves before and after small and large group meetings? Paying close attention to these issues will help your group be a model of "fairness to all groups" -- it will also help motivate participation and support from a larger number of community members.

It is essential to get a list of the names, addresses and phone numbers of the people attending the first meeting. This list will be useful in developing telephone trees for quick communication and mailing lists for fundraising, information, and announcements of the organization's activities.

If the goal of your meeting is to generate more involvement and more parent support, you should make a list of other parents interested in school problems, and identify what their concerns are. To accomplish this, each person attending the public meeting should make a commitment to bring others to the next meeting. Figure 7.4 (p. 138) is a sample "organizing sheet" that commits people to bring a certain number of potential members or interested persons to the next meeting.[2] These organizing sheets encourage people to make a public commitment. They should be filled out at your first meeting. One copy should be retained by the person filling it out, and a second copy should be collected by your core group.

It is important to ask people at the end of the meeting to evaluate what went on. This can be done as a total group, using the form we suggested in Chapter 2 (p. 43). However, if the meeting is large and you are short of time, you can post two or three questions so that everyone can see them. Provide

Figure 7.3 Tips for a First Public Meeting

- Know why you are meeting. Goals and objectives should be clear. A written agenda is usually helpful in focusing the meeting and providing the framework for discussion. Agendas should not be taken lightly and should be well-planned in advance. Use of agendas should not be too inflexible; additions or alternations are sometimes needed.

- Have a working knowledge of key points in Roberts Rules of Order. They will allow you to make interventions in large groups with ease. Try to move the meeting according to the rules.

- Don't overdo it: rigid procedures may backfire. As you use parliamentary rules you might want to explain what you are doing or ask the chairperson to interpret the rules. You do not want other people to feel ignorant or that they are being taken advantage of within the meeting. For instance, if a person "calls the question," the chairperson might explain that there has been a motion to stop discussion and without further delay the group must vote whether to stop or to continue the discussion.

Exercise 7.2 Planning Sheet for a Public Meeting

In relation to your change strategy and change program, why is the meeting being held? ______________________________

____

Goals for the meeting:

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________

Agenda for the meeting:

____

____

____

____

____

____

Date of meeting: ______________________

Time of meeting: ______________________

Place of meeting: ______________________

Who will chair the meeting: ________________

Who will assist the chairperson: ______________

Who will be responsible for arranging the place of the meeting and its physical layout: ______________

Who will be responsible for publicizing the meeting: ___

____

Who will assist in publicizing the meeting: ________

____

What follow-up actions will be put in place during the meeting?

1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________

Figure 7.4 Sample Organizing Sheet

ORGANIZING SHEETS

Name ____ Telephone Number ____________________

The number I guarantee is: ____________________:

	Name	Phone	Address	Their Major Equity Concern(s)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

each person with paper and pencil for responding. If you have the time and energy you can prepare and duplicate a post-meeting reaction form (like those surveys described in Chapter 5). The results of the meeting evaluation should be reviewed by the core group, so you can decide how you can improve your next meeting.

Informing, Appealing and Persuading

In making your decision about what change program to pursue (including concerns, targets and strategies), you identified forces pushing for and against the goals you seek. You might want to review this work by referring back to Chapters 4 and 6. Be sure and refer to your group's action plan that you completed at the end of Chapter 6 (p. 128). In this section, we describe three actions that can be used to alter the forces you have identified and decided are critical to your being able to satisfy your equity concerns. These actions are informing, appealing and persuading. They can be used in consensus as well as mixed strategies. On occasion, conflict strategies also include some use of these actions. The use of the public meetings we just discussed, as well as media and poster campaigns, are examples of information efforts. Appeals are illustrated by petitions and formal complaints to educational and community authorities. Lobbying and legal tactics represent efforts to persuade or exert influences on school leaders to accept programs preferred by parent and community groups.

Informing

The most obvious tactic used by parents wishing to create more information is the media. Television, radio and newspapers can serve several important functions:[3]

- Reinforce the commitment of individuals and organizations, and their supporters in the public, as well as providing them with ammunition.
- Get the organization and its concerns on the public agenda.
- Sensitize decisionmakers to community concerns and make them more vulnerable to public opinion.
- Target an individual or group as a focal point for public pressure.
- Persuade and motivate people, especially through public service advertising, to take action.

All these functions are important for parent groups desiring to build public support and to influence school policies and plans regarding desegregation. The media are especially useful in informing and educating potential supporters who are not yet directly involved or active.

Media campaigns cannot stand alone; but together with other actions they can be a formidable force. Many people active in community groups complain about the media as the "bastion of the establishment," or "they can't possibly give us good coverage, so why bother," but perhaps they have written off the media too quickly. Television, radio, newspapers and magazines are primary sources of current information for many people. Groups deeply involved in acting for educational equity must learn how to use the media for their purposes -- essentially you must make your concerns, activities, and programs newsworthy.

If your parent group does not have much money to spend on media campaigns, you must become adept in getting free news coverage or in planning advertising efforts carefully. Appoint one person in your group to be in charge of media relations. That person should be at the hub of the communication network within the organization. He or she must be familiar with parents' concerns and school issues, and have some working knowledge of the media.

Community groups sometimes must dramatize their concerns in order to make the media responsive to their needs. For instance, press conferences, public meetings, demonstrations, and picketing all draw media coverage. The resultant publicity can be used to promote further media reports, public hearings, or spontaneous public letters to the press and public officials. None of this occurs accidentally; if a community group wants visibility for its change efforts it must plan how to get media coverage.

Another simple media approach is to write a news release. These bulletins can reach large groups of people. Hundreds of other releases compete for space, however, and an editor will only respond to those that are most newsworthy. In a news release about such issues and events, style may be more important than substance in determining whether it is printed. All news releases follow a similar form. Figure 7.5 (p. 141) describes this form.

Television reaches more people than other media, and it is an important and powerful communication vehicle. But it takes some skill and experience to know what TV crews will respond to, and how to get them to respond to specific requests or newsworthy items from community organizations. Radio

Figure 7.5 Form of a News Release [4]

1. Identification. The name, address and phone number of the liaison person or group should be included in the upper left-hand corner of the page.

2. Disposition. The disposition tells the editor when to publish the news -- the time, day, date, and year should appear in capital letters four spaces under the last line of the identification. If the time of the release doesn't matter, FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE should be written instead.

3. Slug. Sometimes a brief, one-line summary of the news release is included just before the content of the story to give the editor some indication of its content.

4. Copy. Copy should be straight news style with an informative "who, what, where, when" lead sentence. If the lead sentence is not attractive, the release has a good chance of being thrown away.

and television stations are required to provide time for public service announcements from community groups. This often results in free 10-second spots being made available. In order for your announcements to be used, your group must be non-profit, non-partisan, and without an advertising budget. This is usually just the case for a newly organized group supporting school desegregation efforts. Perhaps most important of all, the organization or group must appear reasonable and credible to the station's public service director. Contact the station and ask about local regulations and procedures for getting on the air.

Posters or visual aides also are important in sharing information, publicizing events, and reaching out for broader support. Too often, however, posters are crowded with too much information. In designing a poster, use symbols, balance, and color: most of all be neat. Contacting local artists or art teachers supportive of educational equity efforts could provide an opportunity for group members to learn new skills. Posters can be placed in the school and other public buildings. If posters are put on private property, ask people before you use their store, yard, etc. Posters should always be affixed securely to the walls so that they are not easily removed.

Leaflets, like posters, are effective in publicizing an event. When announcing an upcoming meeting, be sure to include the time, place, date, a brief statement about what's happening, and why it's important. Before you design a leaflet, decide who the intended audience is (students in the hall or cafeteria, shoppers, townspeople at a school board meeting) and make it clear, at the beginning of the leaflet, exactly why this leaflet is important to them. Otherwise they won't read it.

Leaflets should be kept simple, and should focus on one event or idea. Instead of one long leaflet, try putting out short leaflets frequently.

Other ways to get the message to people outside your own group might include buttons, bumper stickers, t-shirts, pamphlets, comic books, tabloid newspapers, posters, slide shows, flyers, balloons, arm bands, matchbooks, bus billboards, and wallet cards. Plan careful distribution of all these items. Where can large numbers of parents be contacted? Usually major areas around the entrances to schools, or shopping centers, or at neighborhood meeting places will be best.

In addition to informing the general public, and trying to get other people involved in your change effort, parents can increase their communication with school officials as well. If your parent group has gathered information about the local school, some of that information might be shared with the local principal and teachers, with the school district's community affairs officer, or with the district's staff having responsibility for your group's equity concern. In many cases, the educators will be quite interested in parents' views, and in knowing what kinds of things parents are concerned about. Maybe they will listen with interest, maybe not, but it might be well worth your while to communicate to them your group's concerns and to describe your programs for change. The result might be an invitation to join educators in a joint problem-solving effort to improve desegregation.

Appealing

Parent groups may take a variety of steps to appeal to educators to change current school programs in order to meet parents' concerns. The basis of this approach is that educators care about parents' concerns, and will try to work toward your goals if possible. One form of appeal parents can use is the petition. This is a formal statement of a preferred program (or an objection to a current program), signed by large numbers of people. Petitions can serve several useful purposes:

- They inform educators of the desires and feelings of parents
- They can help bring political pressure to bear on decisionmakers
- They can help inform other parents of important concerns, and that some parents are acting on these concerns
- They can elicit other parents to work for a better desegregation program

In order to be successful, petitions should be carefully worded -- short, direct, and to the point. People carrying petitions and asking others to sign them must be well-informed about the group's concerns, and prepared to talk with potential signers. When a well-planned petition drive collects thousands of community signatures, superintendents and school board members cannot afford to ignore or overlook these expressions of concern.

Parents can also write letters and request conferences with school officials. Letters can be addressed to teachers, principals, or central staff personnel (superintendents and their assistants). In all cases, letters should be as specific as possible, detailing the kind of issue involved, the people involved, and the things you object to or want changed. Ask for a response by a specified time, or offer to meet with the person directly. Do not permit an educator to "pass the buck" to a subordinate; rather, indicate you will pursue the matter with his or her supervisor if not satisfied.

Parents with strong grievances about equity issues and local schools can appeal by filing an official complaint with the school system, the U.S. Department of Education, or the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. When parents feel that their concerns are not being addressed, that their suggestions are not being listened to, that their local appeals are fruitless, or that they themselves are receiving poor treatment by educational leaders, these Federal agencies may be useful. One example of a formal complaint letter is presented in Figure 7.6 (p. 145); it is adapted from a handbook for parent action prepared by the Texas Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.[5] Local parent groups, with local concerns, should not plan to use this letter as is; you should alter it so it fits the concerns and complaints you experience in your own school system.

Parents who do decide to make an appeal should consider the basis of that appeal. Some appeals are based upon the assumption that officials want to satisfy parents' concerns. Others are based upon the assumption that officials want to obey the law, and that pointing out to them that a law is being broken, and asking them to correct that situation, is effective. Other appeals ask for "fair play," "justice" or "equal treatment," and assume that officials are committed to these traditional American values. Any of these bases of appeals may work in the specific situation you are concerned with. However, they are different kinds of appeals. For an appeal to work, you must know enough about the person and the situation to make the most effective appeal to the most appropriate official.

Persuading

Sometimes your concerns can be satisfied through effective persuasion. Some forms of persuasion rely on communication and conversational efforts to change another person's mind. In this approach, it makes sense to present an official with new information, perhaps the information your group gathered earlier. This kind of persuasion is very much like informing.

Another kind of persuasion relies on direct attempts to influence other people. For instance, some parent groups have been successful in lobbying their school board members, city council people or state legislators to accept new programs. Labor unions and corporations have lobbyists who try to

Figure 7.6 Example of a Formal Complaint Letter

U. S. Department of Education
Office of Civil Rights
140 Federal Street
14th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02110[1]

RE: Title VI Complaint

Dear Sir or Madame:

I would like to file a Title VI complaint with your office because I have been discriminated against on the basis of national origin.[2] The specific incident of discrimination occured less than 180 days ago.[3]

(Describe the specific incident here)[4]

It is my belief that this was a discriminatory practice and that it is in contravention to Title VI which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any project or activity receiving Federal funds.

I do not (or do) wish you to use my name in investigating this complaint.

Please keep me informed of any action taken on behalf of this complaint.

Sincerely,

(Sign name)
Return Address
Telephone Number

---

[1] Use the address of the regional U. S. Department of Education office nearest your home.

[2] Here explain on what basis you were discriminated: race, color or national origin.

[3] If the type of discrimination is ongoing and is continuous, you may not have to file within 180 days although it is always safer to do so within the 180 days.

[4] If possible, include the alleged discrimination occurred, the person responsible, the person's title and department, your work relationship to the person committing the alleged discrimination, and whether other persons are similarly treated.

influence legislators to vote for bills that support their interests. So do many consumer and special interest groups. For the most part, they have been quite successful. Many parents are intimidated by this process; especially those parents who have been excluded from having any influence in the school in the past. They may not have had the experience of being active in a large public meeting, the school board meeting room, the city council, or a state legislator's office.

A key to successful lobbying is the number and the influence of other people whom you represent. Officials always are concerned with numbers, and a well-organized parent group can give the impression of representing lots of people who feel very strongly on a given concern. Anderson outlines several features of successful lobbying.[6]

> Have your proposal down pat before going into the legislator's (or school official's) office. You will have only three to four minutes, but if you make your point strongly and quickly enough you might get asked to stay 20 or 30 minutes.
>
> Only make two or three points and stick to these. If you make a whole bunch of points the official will forget; he or she is not likely to take notes.
>
> Have a letter writing party when you return home so that letters can be clearly written and precise. Main points can be listed on blackboard or newsprint and each person can send out letters periodically. Then return to the official's office and ask if he or she is getting any public response on the issue you proposed.

It doesn't take many letters to influence an elected or appointed official, providing they are well-written and timely. But a personal visit is even more important: going to the school administration building, city hall, or state capitol together enhances group morale. If you do make such a visit, plan it well ahead of time, and ask elected officials to speak with your group. Ask him or her how you can be more effective -- after all, who knows more about lobbying than those being lobbied? Ask:

- What's the process by which a bill or a rule comes into being and becomes law? Or procedure?
- How does one make an appointment to see a legislator? Or public official? How can you get around difficult questions that assistants and/or secretaries may pose?
- How does one find out what districts various legislators or officials are from and what committees they are involved with?

State legislators, after all, make policy that can affect local schools directly. As DeHerrera notes:[7] "A state legislator gets to vote on one of the biggest sources of money for schools -- state education funds. State dollars are used to equalize school taxes and to make sure that schools offer programs such as education for handicapped children and bilingual/bicultural education." Elected officials need solid information on how effective schools are. One of the best ways for this information to be gotten to legislators is through the lobbying process. It is their responsibility to respond to community concerns, and to provide answers and solutions. If these officials fail to respond meaningfully, then the stage is set for broader influence and conflict within the context of electoral campaigns.

If efforts to lobby with elected officials don't work, community groups can consider influencing elections directly. In addition to state and national legislators, several other kinds of elections have relevance for school equity issues. One is local school board elections. Since few people generally vote in these local elections, a well-organized parent group may be able to elect their own candidate, or have significant impact on who does run and get elected. In addition to school boards themselves, many localities also have elections for school bonds, referenda, and other financial matters. Neighborhood associations and clubs, as well as the local parent-teacher organization and the city council, are areas where elected officials make important decisions. Parent groups might want to get involved in "working" directly for one candidate or another, or in lobbying those local officials once they are elected.

At certain times in the process of persuading, appealing and informing, you may discover that powerful and influential people in the school and community wish to join with you and help to improve the schools. It is important to take advantage of these offers when they arise, and even to try to anticipate them. Are there some influential people who you know and could reach out to, who might help you act on your equity concerns? Exercise 7.3 (p. 148) should help you identify these people, and plan how you might approach them.

Summary

This chapter has provided you with information on things you can do to implement consensus strategies and mixed strategies of change. We suggest ways to make problem-solving groups more effective. Because of the frequent need for public meetings, guidelines for planning and operating such meetings were provided. To help alter the local forces that affect whether you meet

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Exercise 7.3 Identifying Influential People Who Might Work With Us In Improving Educational Equity

Name	Which of our concerns do they share?	How can we reach them? Who knows them?

your concerns and implement your change program, we described different activities that can be used to either inform or appeal to or persuade the public and/or educational officials.

As a summary, Exercise 7.4 will help you identify your change group's needs for actions which inform, appeal and persuade.

Sometimes collaborative action won't work. The necessary parties sometimes want no part of the changes you favor, and furthermore may actively resist parent initiatives for change. Parent and community groups need to be prepared to use pressure and be involved in conflict. Sometimes, the already existing crises in schools give parents no choice about being involved in escalated conflict. Either way, parent groups need to understand what to expect and what they can do to be effective under such conditions. The next chapter focuses on activities which use conflict and pressure.

Exercise 7.4 Identifying Actions Which Inform, Appeal or Persuade

Before beginning this exercise, review the change program your group wishes to implement and your plan of activities and strategy of change.

For each of the three types of action we have described in this chapter, identify and describe the most important actions your group needs to satisfy its concerns.

INFORMING ____

____

____

APPEALING ____

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____

PERSUADING ____

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CHAPTER 8

MAKING CHANGES THROUGH THE USE OF CONFLICT AND PRESSURE

As you implement your strategy for change, it would not be unusual if you encountered conflict and crisis. Schools and communities across the nation continue to experience intense conflict over equity issues. In cases where racial equity is the issue, or when desegregation is being ignored, there is high potential for crisis. Your prior analysis and experience may have identified the likelihood of such a situation. You may even be planning for it, especially if your other attempts to make change have been ignored or refused. This chapter will help you create changes using activities which fit conflict strategies as well as activities you might use to respond to conflict and crisis.

Before describing specific actions, we will provide background information on conflict and crisis. The chapter will also discuss school officials' responses to conflict and how parents can respond positively to crisis situations.

Conflict Escalation and Crisis

A crisis is a situation in which any group is deprived of security or respect. This applies to the threats or disruptions that make it impossible for administrators and teachers to carry out their duties; but also applies to the unmet concerns and discrimination experienced by youngsters or their parents. Student or parent crises usually are not defined as official crises, because they are not seen as threatening the school's ability to operate or the stability of the community. Administrative or official crises are seen most vividly in the closing of schools, and the failure of education to continue as before. In either case, this is a critical situation, one which demands immediate attention. Crises can be prevented, but they also can be managed in peaceful and even productive ways once they do occur.

Conflict is the situation where two or more groups within the school or community struggle over concerns and program priorities. This is a continual state of affairs, but not necessarily a critical one. Disagreement and struggle is a natural part of social life, especially on matters as important as educational equity and desegregation. Conflicts can be dealt with in ways that maintain peace in the school and community, and that improve education.

A key to effective management of conflict, and prevention of crises, lies in understanding the warning signs that important parent or student concerns are being ignored or overlooked. The Community Relations Service (U.S. Department of Justice) suggests that the following signals indicate that a crisis may be imminent.[1]

Figure 8.1 Symptoms of Crisis

Symptoms which precede the crisis by varying lengths of time:

- Sudden self-segregation
- Increased number of isolated racial fights
- Appearance of "underground" publications and flyers concerning racial matters
- Complaints of inequality of treatment as it relates to discipline, grading, tracking, athletics and other extracurricular activities
- Disproportionate number of disciplinary actions
- Appearance of "demands"
- A racial incident, or disorder in the community at large
- Appearance of racist literature
- Discovery of weapons in school
- Increased numbers of incidents on buses and bus routes
- Over-utilization of minority staff to deal exclusively with minority children who are in trouble
- Increased conflicts relating to life styles, clothing, etc.
- Conflicts over type of music to be played at school dances and location of these functions
- All-white or all-minority athletic teams
- Lack of minority staff
- Lack of minority curricula and materials
- Warnings of custodial, cafeteria and transportation personnel

Parent groups concerned about equity issues face several choices regarding the use of conflict escalation strategies. For instance, has your group tried consensus strategies that have failed? Do you want to force administrators to define the situation as a crisis? Is the commitment of parents to non-violent actions strong enough to resist an attack from others? Do parent groups have enough power to persuade administrators to comply with their concerns without the situation getting out of hand?

Escalated conflict may present school officials with a strong incentive for change; a crisis may make it mandatory. However, that does not mean the change will be positive: retreat and repression are also possibilities. In general, crisis conditions leave administrators with fewer options; conflict leaves more flexibility for the use of problem-solving and negotiations.

Not all escalated conflicts are planned by parent groups acting for educational equity. In some communities, crises of violent proportions have been generated by groups opposing such change, or by groups with a very different definition of equity. Sometimes resistance is directed toward leaders of equity programs, and other times towards the organizations and coalitions involved.

Escalated public crises such as these sometimes have resulted in violence among youngsters — in buses, schools, playgrounds and neighborhoods. Parent and student groups acting for equity in peaceful ways must not only out-organize these opposing community forces, but must be prepared to withstand personal harassment and attack as well.

Conflict-Oriented Change Efforts: Dealing With the Crisis Potential

In some cities, school officials or powerful community groups resist parent efforts to act for educational equity. Perhaps they have different values. Perhaps they are desirous of not offending other local parent groups, and would rather not take any risks. Whatever the reason -- when your efforts to inform, appeal or persuade educational leaders fail, new actions that fit conflict strategies can be considered. Exercise 8.1 (p. 155) suggests some ways you can raise these issues in your group and situation.

In deciding to use these conflict-oriented actions as a means to facilitate school change, several questions should be addressed:[2]

- Has there been an adequate process of information-gathering prior to the effort to escalate conflict and create administrative crisis?
- Have prior appeals or influence attempts changed policy?

- Have you analyzed the situation to anticipate how key educational or public officials will react?
- Is the inconvenience, injustice, pain or crisis that stimulated the use of this strategy recognizable to the opponent?

These critical questions should be asked at every step in the process. Depending on your answers, your group can intensify or de-escalate the conflict and decide whether to redirect a potential crisis.

Parent groups considering using a conflict strategy for change must do a particularly careful job of planning. For instance, it is just not sensible for you and your group to take risky action, to escalate a conflict, and potentially to precipitate an underlying crisis, unless you know what you are doing and why. You should be clear on the probable outcomes of such action, as well as the steps to take along the way.

One action consistent with a conflict strategy for acting for educational equity is a legal challenge, or court suit. A formal legal suit, charging unconstitutional segregation of students, or unfair plans to desegregate these students, has been the catapault for improved desegregation efforts in many cities across the nation.[3] Often school and community leaders refuse to listen to parents' (especially minority group parents') concerns. A lawsuit forces them to listen and respond, although it doesn't necessarily require them to accept your program. That will be up to the judge.

It also is possible for your group to join or intervene in a legal suit or hearing that may already be underway. You can create a plan of your own, or comment on some other group's plan, in the form of an _amicus curiae_ (friend of the court) statement. In most desegregation cases brought to court, there are several competing plans under consideration -- the plaintiff's (usually a community group desiring desegregation), the defendant's (usually the school system), and perhaps an _amicus_ brief for or against the plan (from a local community group). That means there's plenty of room for the judge to utilize parts of several groups' plans in the creation of a court order, and he might well use one filed by your community group in support of peaceful and more effective desegregation. These legal challenges can be expensive and may take several years to complete, so think and plan carefully before you start. You will need to consult a lawyer. Sometimes, just the threat of filing a lawsuit will get you a good response, and then you will not have to go further.

Exercise 8.1 Preparing Your Group for a Conflict Strategy

Review your equity concerns, and the major targets and programs you selected to work with in a local change effort.

Review your experience in trying to create change.
What did you try to do? And what happened? ____________________

____

1. Who did you try to inform about your concerns?

   ____________________ ____________________

   How did they respond?

   ____

   ____

2. Who did you appeal to with your concerns?

   ____________________ ____________________

   How did they respond?

   ____

   ____

3. Who did you try to persuade about your concerns?

   ____________________ ____________________

   How did they respond?

   ____

   ____

How many of the parents in your group still want to work on these concerns and programs? ____________________

____

Another legal action consistent with a conflict strategy of change could involve continuing efforts to file letters of complaint such as the one described in Figure 7.6 (p. 145). A large number of these letters, accompanied by many phone calls, can produce action by a Federal agency. Investigations of your complaints may result in good publicity and greater pressure on school officials to respond. In some cases, rare though they may be, Federal agencies have threatened to withhold Federal funds from school systems that failed to take positive actions to support and improve educational equity.

Non-violent demonstrations are another set of actions your group might consider. Boycotts of school, picket lines, sit-ins, and other demonstrations of concern and pressure all involve large numbers of people acting directly to confront and challenge school or community officials. These forms of non-violent protest express the refusal to go along with school as usual, and raise the consciousness of many people in the community. However, you must be careful in the use of these actions. They may lead to charges of illegal trespass or violence. Violence is especially dangerous to parent and student groups, and should be avoided at all costs. Violence provides an excuse for officials to use coercive or police power. It also may shift public sympathy and moral support from your side to the other side.

Adherence to the principles of non-violent, but conflict-oriented strategy, as defined in Figure 8.2 on the next page, may help your group avoid dangerous pitfalls. The intent behind using legal actions and overt action demonstrations is to pressure educators to act differently and to mobilize the consciences of others. They make it more difficult to implement policies which are unjust and discriminatory. Civic action of this sort demands and respects significant commitment to the basic framework of laws in a democracy. People who cannot support such principles should not participate in direct action demonstrations.

Some demonstrations are spontaneous and some are planned well ahead of time. For instance, most demonstrations by high school students have had a largely spontaneous character; students become incensed and decide on the spot to do something about it. Usually no particular group sat down to plan what kind of demonstration they thought would be best. There is nothing wrong with spontaneity and it frequently results in some change, however small. But if your group wants to be most effective, you will have to anticipate events that motivate people to demonstrate, and to try to plan those demonstrations as

Figure 8.2 Principles of Non-Violent Direct Action[4]

Conflict is an essential part of social change. The problem is how to use it non-violently and effectively, through such tactics as demonstrations, strikes, boycotts, etc.

Truth belongs to both sides. Because the opponent, too, has some truth in his position, negotiations will be necessary at some point to resolve the conflict.

Openness in planning and actions must be maintained, both for internal democracy and presenting a clear image to outsiders.

Preparation for non-violent action includes stating goals, planning strategy, deciding on tactics, and establishing discipline.

Non-retaliation: a strict policy of non-retaliation disarms the opponent instead of destroying him.

Place enough pressure on the change target so that she/he or the institution can no longer function without dealing with your concerns.

Place pressure in a way that appeals to the consciences and values of potential supporters in the communities at large.

much as possible. A carefully planned demonstration involves a large number of parents, students, and community members. If just a few people are involved, the administration or community opposition can easily identify or isolate you, and either retaliate or ignore and disregard your activities.

Because picket lines or demonstrations involve so many people with so many possible agendas, you must carefully plan to bring attention to specific concerns and targets. For instance, the selective boycott of a certain teacher's class often is more effective than a total boycott of the school, because it focuses attention on a specific target. Selective actions should be accomplished by a clear statement of the problem.

Be careful. There is a tendency for non-violent demonstrations to become violent. Non-violent demonstrations can be transformed, sometimes by counter-demonstrators, by local officials, or even by demonstrators themselves. If violence appears likely take extra precautions by informing police about your concerns and your commitment to non-violence.

When you use a conflict strategy, a key resource is each person's willingness to take risks to bring about increased educational equity. But how much risk is appropriate? And what kinds of risks might each person take? If you and your group are not clear on the risks you are about to take, you might end up quite over-extended and vulnerable. Thus, it is important to assess risks and commitments in advance and to plan change programs within the limits of each person's behavior. Exercise 8.3 (p. 160) represents one tool people might utilize in such action planning.[5] Before individuals do this exercise, the group should select as a focus an important action you anticipate undertaking.

If each person involved in your planning effort fills out this chart with regard to a key action to be taken, the group can discuss what this means for your program. Not everyone is prepared to risk the same things in the same amounts; a good change group should include people prepared to take varying risks for quality and equality in education. It is easy to fantasize about risks, and then to become paralyzed by their apparent reality. People who talk together can provide support for one another in determining the realities of various risks, and in helping people do what they feel comfortable in doing.

Exercise 8.3 Analyzing Risks for Members of the Change Group

ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL RISK

Potential Risk to be Taken: ______________________________

Possible Loss	Probability of Loss Actually Occurring	What Am I Committed To Risking?
1. Economic (e.g., job, property value, etc.)		
2. Physical Well-Being (e.g., injury, stress, etc.)		
3. Personal Pride and Confidence (e.g., feeling uncertain about what's right, guilty for violating rules, etc.)		
4. Friends and Family Relationships (e.g., being excluded, criticized, talked about, etc.)		
5. Status and Reputation in the Neighborhood or Larger Community (e.g., not being elected to office, consulted for advice, etc.)		
6.		
7.		

Official Responses to Escalated Conflict and Crisis

Most school administrators, like most parents and students, have not been trained to handle conflict strategies of change, and may overreact to parents' pressures or threats. As people, they may be sympathetic, but as administrators with prescribed responsibilities they often feel hemmed in and threatened. A crisis, even a non-violent one, intensifies these feelings. Figure 8.4 (p. 162) identifies the conflicting forces some principals experience in crisis situations.

Your group can utilize Figure 8.4 as an aid in planning how to persuade or pressure a local principal. All the types of forces acting upon her or him can be placed in your force field analysis. Then you could plan how to alter some of these forces: you could help reduce some of them and escalate others.

For some principals and school administrators, the effect of all these forces can be quite overwhelming, and can prevent imaginative and effective responses to parent and community concerns and programs. In fact, faced with all these competing pressures and conflicts, some educational leaders respond to crisis with ineffective and dysfunctional responses -- some of which further escalate a tense situation.

Sometimes educational administrators try to deny the feelings and controversy that is frequently a part of action for educational equity. Often this stimulates concerned groups to press harder. (See Exercise 8.4, page 163.)

A closely related response is distorted understandings of what is occurring. One example is attributing events to some sort of conspiracy. As one principal stated:[7]

> I am certain that there were organized forces in the community at work. The superintendent almost was ready to take one individual into court, a prominent leader in a community, who was contributing to this kind of thing. For example, the day that all the sit-ins occurred, literature was passed out at every school simultaneously. We knew where those were mimeographed, but a complete denial of this occurred. Also, when these students were parading around, a couple of adults came over, and talked with them. If you go to meetings with other administrators and start comparing demands, you'll find that out of 16 demands, probably 13 or 14 of them are the same ones.

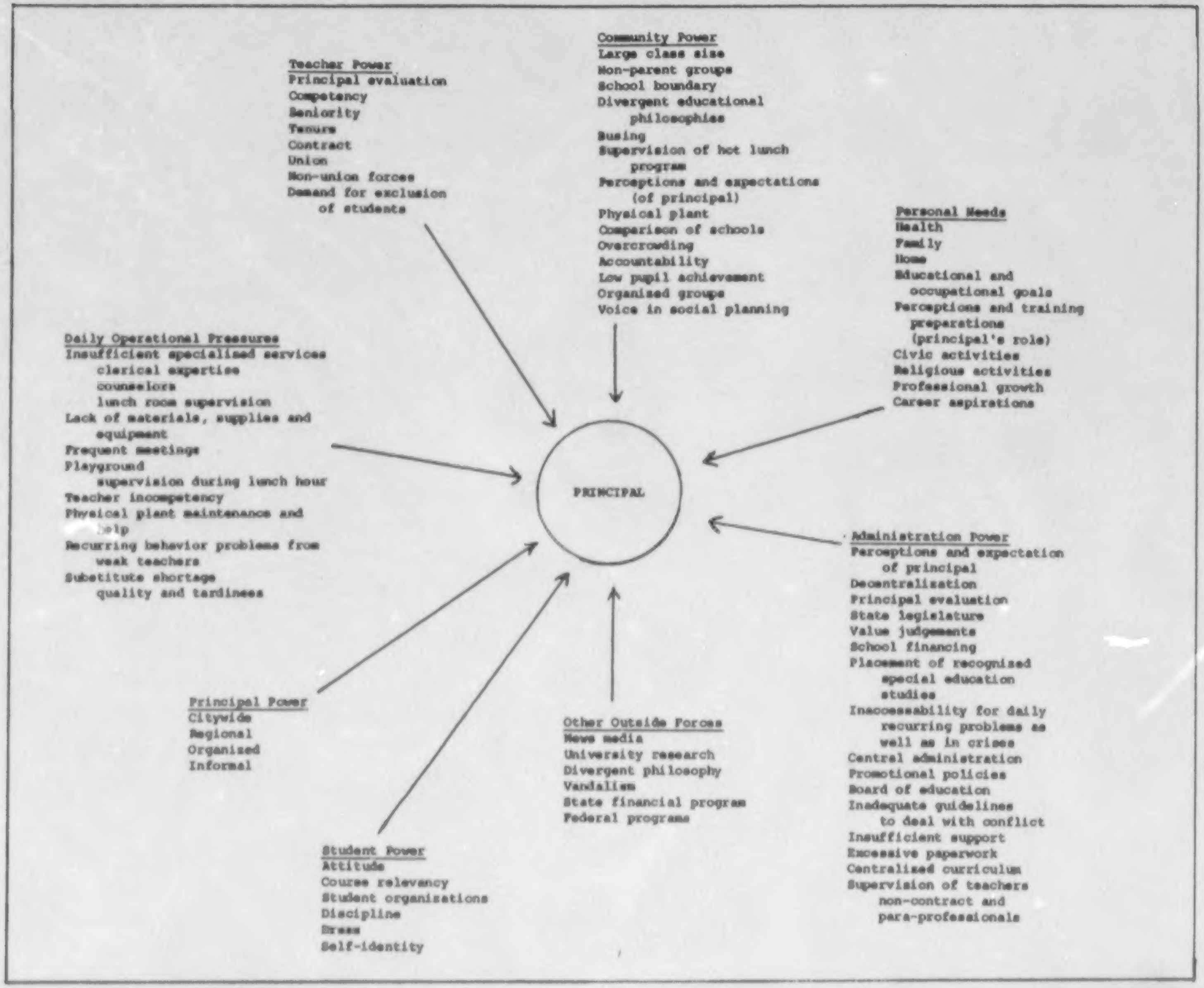
Community Power
Large class size
Non-parent groups
School boundary
Divergent educational philosophies
Busing
Supervision of hot lunch program
Perceptions and expectations (of principal)
Physical plant
Comparison of schools
Overcrowding
Accountability
Low pupil achievement
Organized groups
Voice in social planning
Teacher Power
Principal evaluation
Competency
Seniority
Tenure
Contract
Union
Non-union forces
Demand for exclusion of students
Personal Needs
Health
Family
Home
Educational and occupational goals
Perceptions and training preparations (principal's role)
Civic activities
Religious activities
Professional growth
Career aspirations
Daily Operational Pressures
Insufficient specialized services
clerical expertise
counselors
lunch room supervision
Lack of materials, supplies and equipment
Frequent meetings
Playground supervision during lunch hour
Teacher incompetency
Physical plant maintenance and help
Recurring behavior problems from weak teachers
Substitute shortage quality and tardiness
PRINCIPAL
Administration Power
Perceptions and expectation of principal
Decentralization
Principal evaluation
State legislature
Value judgements
School financing
Placement of recognized special education studies
Inaccessability for daily recurring problems as well as in crises
Central administration
Promotional policies
Board of education
Inadequate guidelines to deal with conflict
Insufficient support
Excessive paperwork
Centralized curriculum
Supervision of teachers non-contract and para-professionals
Principal Power
Citywide
Regional
Organized
Informal
Other Outside Forces
News media
University research
Divergent philosophy
Vandalism
State financial program
Federal programs
Student Power
Attitude
Course relevancy
Student organizations
Discipline
Dress
Self-identity

Figure 8.4 Secondary School Principals' Perceptions of the Forces Operating on Them During a Crisis [6]

Exercise 8.4 It Can't Happen Here...Or Can It?

As an Hispanic parent in a school about to be desegregated, you are aware of conflicting feelings within the Hispanic community with regard to local desegregation. Some parents feel their school will be invaded; others feel their children will be harassed by Anglos; others fear loss of the local bilingual education program. Substantial protest is quite likely to occur if the plan is not shared soon with the community, and if community input is not listened to closely.

In recent trips you have taken into the white community, whose children will be bused into this school, you have felt the tension and hostility directed towards you.

You have spoken to the principal, an Anglo, and he assures you he has excellent working relations with the leadership of the Hispanic community. They support the desegregation program and, he says, they have assured him there is no serious disagreement within the responsible elements of the Hispanic community. Despite the fact that crises have erupted over just such circumstances in nearby communities, the principal says that "it just can't happen here...I'm on top of it."

What might you do? Who can you reach?

What would it take to convince someone a crisis is imminent?

When your group is well organized, perhaps as well organized as educators themselves, you may represent quite a threat. For community leaders or educators to see such organized groups as illegitimate or evil, however, is quite dangerous. It prevents them from establishing effective cooperation with you.

Sometimes those people who protest and try to create change are called immature or irresponsible. Such labelling of people who are usually acting out of sincere concern and great frustration creates additional tension and may lead to crisis. Invariably, conflict escalation strategies are a last resort, and are an indication of strong feelings about the school conditions that create concern for minority or white students and parents.

Educational administrators sometimes respond by meeting with concerned groups. Such meetings can involve dialogue in which true concerns and assumptions are better understood by these officials. On occasion, the media attention given to such meetings can be a way for parent groups to communicate their needs and goals to the wider community.

On the other hand, such meetings can be used intentionally and unintentionally to divert attention from the concrete policies and behaviors of school officials. When this happens, the pressures for problem-solving and real change are reduced. Many educators who will not undertake real change are very willing to talk, and talk, and talk. We do not suggest you should refuse to discuss and explore issues. But when exploration is a hoax, and listening becomes posturing, talk is a substitute for action. Then it drains important energies away from the creation and implementation of your programs.

Sometimes educational administrations respond to school conflicts and crises with force. Policies like ones specifying who can and cannot be present in school facilities are rigidly enforced. Other times, the number of security guards, police and monitors is increased and directed to reduce the outward manifestation of conflict. Force is also exercised through efforts to take over or destroy groups protesting school policies and practices. This can happen by establishing new leadership loyal to officials, denying groups places to meet and other needed resources like information on plans and policies, and by publicly demeaning the intentions and capabilities of challenging groups.

There is no denying that educational officials sometimes must use force in trying to insure the safety of involved individuals and parties. Temporary restrictive actions can sometimes be justified, if they are temporary and if they do not single out challenging groups or individuals. Unfortunately, escalated force by officials may be used to blame conflicts on particular groups of students and parents, rather than to solve problems of inequality and injustice. Then, forceful emergency measures may increase the same sense of inequity, exclusion and non-concern that generated parent protest in the first place.

Positive Responses to Crises by Parent Groups

Parent groups must develop, and help school officials develop, more positive responses to crises, responses that deal with their concerns for improving the school and attaining equity. The search for new responses can begin with gathering information about the crisis and about other aspects of the school situation. See Figure 8.4 (p. 166) for some guidelines for an analysis of a crisis.[8]

Some cities have specially trained police units that can intervene early in a potential dispute, and prevent a crisis by mediation. For instance, the Dayton, Ohio, Police Department has a well-respected community relations department which specializes in conflict mediation. The unit has eight police and four civilians who have been extensively trained for their specialized function.[9]

Conflict intervention team members met with students in seminars, assemblies, conferences, workshops, classrooms, and street parties to explore and dissect myths, rumors, false and malicious statements, and ignorant beliefs. This brought about an understanding on the part of both black and white students that the fast-moving pace of our times calls for interdependence. These discussions have been expanded to include parents and the residents of the school neighborhoods. In addition, the team members have promoted the establishment of student-faculty-administration councils, which bring normally separated people into a more positive alliance.

Regardless of police reactions and programs, parent groups can and have taken the lead in generating other helpful responses to school crises. One relevant activity is rumor control centers or "hotlines."[10] Other approaches that share information rapidly and widely, such as newsletters, media coverage, public meetings, can help counter myths and share details about school conditions and change efforts.

In the midst of a crisis situation, it is likely some type of formal negotiation between contending parties may be helpful. Negotiation is a conflict-management device that permits expression of grievances and concerns,

Figure 8.4 Questions to Answer in Analyzing a Crisis

Information on the Current Situation

1. What parties are involved? What subgroups of of students, faculty and community groups?

2. What are the apparent issues? What are the underlying issues? Do they relate directly to the desegregation program? Parents' concerns?

3. What form has the protest or disruption taken?

4. Was there a specific event that triggered the crisis? If so, what was it? What other events or situations led up to the crisis?

5. What are the public relations of the following major groups and their subgroups?

   a. faculty
   b. school board
   c. administration
   d. community
   e. students
   f. civic leaders

6. Have the police been called in? If so, who made the decision to call them?

7. What has been done so far to deal with the crisis?

8. Who can be contacted for additional information?

   a. counselors
   b. teachers
   c. student leaders
   d. administrators or school board members
   e. community leaders (majority and minority)

and new ideas and programs, in a carefully controlled arena. It encourages a contest without violence or widespread disorder. However, only when community groups have generated enough power to force a reaction can real negotiations begin. The difference between negotiations and conversations is that in the former educational authorities must listen to parent groups: these groups have the power to require compromise and change. Thus, effective and potent organizing efforts and campaigns may in the long run create new patterns of communication wherein parents and students feel free to address administrators with their real concerns, and wherein administrators must listen and respond.

Sometimes negotiations are intense, long and even bitter; other times they are informal and relaxed. The actual process depends on the nature of the issues, and the degree of trust participants have in each other. Sometimes two parties, a parent group and school officials, are present in negotiations. Sometimes several parties representing diverse community groups are present. Regardless of the type of negotiations, the keys to effective bargaining are several-fold: (1) be clear about your group's major concerns; (2) know exactly how much support you have from other parents; (3) never underestimate your opponent; (4) make demands and threats softly but clearly; (5) fight for important things; (6) keep in touch with your constituency; and (7) don't make threats unless you are prepared to carry them out.

Using Conflict to Achieve Change

In this chapter, we examined actions and responses which can be taken by parents using a conflict strategy of change during desegregation. To do this, we focused on the nature of conflict and crises in schools, and what could be done to prevent such conditions. Information was provided about the typical responses principals and other officials may make to conflict and crisis. The alternatives of parents using the courts and taking non-violent actions were discussed. When parents use non-violent demonstrations and boycotts they must recognize them as high risk actions and take important precautions.

Chapters 7 and 8 have focused on carrying out your programs of change, It is important that your work not stop here. Following-up your successes is essential. Chapter 9 will describe several things that can be done to find out what changes actually have been made in the school, and whether your original goals have really been achieved and suggests a continuing series of actions for parent groups.

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CHAPTER 9

FOLLOWING-UP SCHOOL CHANGES

Once programs to attain greater educational equity have been implemented, groups often feel that their influence has been felt, their concerns have been met, and their work is done. This is not so. Many parents have learned the hard way: school change cannot be left to educators alone. The process requires constant community attention and action. One way to maintain efforts at change is through parent leadership in continuing evaluation and monitoring.

This chapter on follow-up activities has many similarities to the earlier chapter on gathering information (Chapter 5), and they should be used together. The major difference between gathering information for planning your change effort and for evaluating that effort has to do with timing. One happens early to help parents prepare; the other happens much later, after implementation. Many of the same concerns exist at both stages, however, and many of the same procedures and tools can be used.

This chapter also has some similarities to the earlier chapter on building a core group (Chapter 2), because you will need a continuing group to play an ongoing role in school change. The nature of this group and its actions may change somewhat, but some of the same issues have to be dealt with again.

Your Change Strategy Influences the Kind of Follow-Up

In the consensus change strategy, the follow-up usually is called evaluation. Evaluation tries to find out if the change program accomplished its goals and satisfied your original concerns. Generally, your group and school officials can work together to gain an agreed upon appraisal of program outcomes. You may use volunteers, or even a paid staff of experts, to assess the school system's progress, and to report back to educators. In several cities, evaluation programs included parents as data collectors, as bus riders appointed to observe and report on racial relations in buses and playgrounds.[1] Guidelines for evaluators working within the consensus strategy usually caution against immediate parent action in changing what they see, limit the places parents should look and what they should look for, stress the responsibility of the school system for any decisions or changes, and require observations or data

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to be turned over to school officials. Officials may act on the data on their own, or may convene joint school-community problem-solving teams to plan further changes.

In the conflict change strategy, follow-up is usually called monitoring. It also attempts to discover if pre-established concerns and programs are being satisfied as planned. However, these monitors are not predisposed to trust or work with educators; rather they may be suspicious of reporting back to educators, unwilling to limit their inquiry, and desirous of quick action on problems they see. Parents conducting monitoring activities of this sort generally prefer to do it themselves, and are reluctant to hire experts or outsiders. Moreover, monitoring is seen as part of the change group's broader effort to involve more parents in school activities, and to hold school officials publicly accountable for the state of equity in education. Thus, the long-range hope is to develop an increasingly knowledgeable and potent parent organization that can continue to influence school policy and program. Information gathered in monitoring might be shared directly with educators; but more likely it would be shared first with other parent groups involved in monitoring. If the monitoring indicates school officials are not proceeding as promised, the information might be utilized to sharpen differences between schools and parent advocates, and to aid in placing public pressure on the school system.

Often, the questions asked by evaluators and monitors, operating from either a conflict or a consensus approach to change, will be the same. Both will have to cope with some discomfort and perhaps suspicion on the part of the school staff. No matter how collaboratively an evaluation is conducted, it is almost impossible to avoid posing some level of threat to teachers and principals. These educators may be uncomfortable with the feeling that parents and outsiders are looking over their shoulders as they do their jobs.

Getting Organized for Evaluating and Monitoring

One way of organizing follow-up is through the schools themselves. Hundreds of parents throughout the country have entered schools as aides and paraprofessionals and have informed community members about what goes on inside these buildings. Others have been invited to serve on a volunteer basis, and to demonstrate community interest and concern. More parents would become involved in these activities if they were encouraged to do so, and if useful roles and resources were provided for them. Another way of organizing these activities is through your own group, somewhat independently of the schools.

For instance, your parent group might work on its own, but with collaborative arrangements that guarantee access to observe in the schools, permission to look through school records, etc. In several cities, autonomous parent and community groups have worked through local foundations, universities, courts, or on their own. Whatever your base of operations, it will be important to coordinate the actions of many diverse groups of people, including representatives from different parent or community organizations. As part of a parent organization, you can set up committees which will do different parts of the total evaluation or monitoring task. An overall steering committee might make major decisions about what information should be gathered and how it should be used. Different subcommittees could concentrate on getting information from parts of the school and community (one for staff, one for students, one for civic leaders, etc.). If the school system is the base of operations, the Department of Research or Community Relations ought to fit evaluation within its ongoing structure. If neither of these conditions are present, a temporary group may have to be established.

An organization or group evaluating equity programs from a consensus strategy could proceed by specifying a sequence of activities to be completed. The first stage of the evaluation process is to form a broad monitoring committee representing different interests, statuses, races, social classes, and ages. This committee should identify the purpose of the evaluation, and specify the programs to be evaluated. After this is done, the evaluation group should plan how many days of work will be needed and the dates by which the different tasks involved should be done.

The actual gathering of information is done by observation, surveys and analysis of records (the same as we discussed in Chapter 5). Committee members should get clearance from the principal of the school before gathering data; if the superintendent's staff is involved, it ought to provide blanket clearance throughout the school system. Data analysis should consist of simple tables summarizing the information you have gathered, followed by brief interpretations which make sense to teachers and parents. The information you present should indicate the weaknesses or strengths of the equity program, and point the way for change. Parent and school personnel working on the evaluation may have to reanalyze the information until they can identify the next step that should be taken to better satisfy the concerns underlying the evaluation. The final step is to make your findings and recommendations public by releasing them to the school board and community.

A group or organization monitoring equity programs from a conflict strategy probably will proceed somewhat differently. Like a consensus-oriented evaluation, the first stage of the monitoring involves forming a group to do the work. In this case, the monitoring group is made up of parents with similar concerns who come together to develop objectives and determine the activities to be monitored. Like evaluation, the monitoring process utilizes surveys, observations, and records analysis. Before gathering information, the monitoring group should attempt to gain clearance from any principal whose school is to be entered. If the monitoring group isn't powerful or well thought of by school officials, it will have a difficult time getting permission to gather information in schools.

The alternatives are either to collaborate with the school system in order to get permission, or to collect information only outside of the schools -- where permission from the schools is not needed.

As the monitoring group gathers and analyzes the information, it should be in constant communication with its parent organization or constituency. The information should be helpful to parents' groups in energizing them to continue working on change and directing them toward critical concerns which have yet to be met. The result may be to enter a bargaining process until renewed efforts or new concerns and programs are agreed on. If the monitoring group and its constituency is satisfied that their concerns about desegregation programs have been met, there is no need to mobilize their base of power for further bargaining.

A sequence of activities like we have described is useful only when evaluation or monitoring is an ongoing activity. One-shot, single-issue, or informal listening efforts do not require such activities. But at the same time, informal data gathering and one-time evaluations cannot be expected to have significant impact on the school equity process.

Conducting Monitoring or Evaluation Activities

The first step in planning is to specify the particular part of the change program to be evaluated or monitored. At the same time, the group with responsibility for follow-up should be clear on the underlying concern which gave rise to the change program and the targets of the program itself. Exercise 9.1 on the next page should be used by your follow-up group in establishing the foundation for its work.

Exercise 9.1 Determining the Key Characteristic of the Change Program to be Evaluated or Monitored

Educational Equity Concern(s) of Parents Which Gave Rise to the Change Program: ____________________

____

____

Change Program(s) to be Evaluated or Monitored: ______

____

____

Targets of the Program: (1) ____________________

____

(2) ____________________

____

(3) ____________________

____

(4) ____________________

____

Any Hunches Your Group Has About Things That Will Require A Very Close Examination: ____________________

____

____

____

____

How will you gather the needed information from each source? The material in Chapter 5 may be helpful. Examine the examples that we provided of each means of obtaining information and see if any of them will be suitable for your purposes. It is quite likely that some parts of these information gathering tools will be appropriate. After you have completed this review, you will be in a position to develop your own information gathering tools.

As in your earlier information gathering efforts to prepare your change plan, you will face the challenge of using the information gathered in the evaluation. The final section of Chapter 5 contains information which will be useful at this stage. The skills you developed in your earlier information gathering will be useful as well. Exercise 9.2 (p. 175) can help you plan how to share the evaluative data with other people.

Maintaining an Active Group

In addition to conducting an evaluation and pursuing monitoring activities, another critical part of a group follow-up is maintaining your parent group over time. Experience with actions for educational equity across the nation has demonstrated that the job is never really done. Many parent and community groups have filed suit several times, and have had to keep on going back to court to force school and community officials to implement a good desegregation plan, and to keep it implemented. Numerous "second generation" problems often occur after the first stage of actions has been accomplished. Despite the best efforts of parents and educators, inequitable situations or policies continue to occur in school, and parents must continue to help school officials deal with them.

One of the problems in maintaining a good effort over time is discovering how to keep a high level of energy and concern within your group. Some parents will stop being involved after a while, and they will leave. Perhaps their children have graduated; perhaps they have given up the fight; or perhaps they are just tired. You will need to keep on finding new people, and recruiting others on the same basis that you built a larger group out of the original core group. Don't expect everyone to maintain their interest; you must look for new members all the time.

Remember, the figures we presented in Chapter 6 showed change processes to be cyclical. They turned back in on themselves and continued. They never really came to an end, and neither can your efforts.

The evaluation and/or monitoring activity can be a boost to your ability

Exercise 9.2 Sharing Evaluative Data

Prepare various charts or tables that indicate the things you have discovered in evaluation or monitoring activities.

1. Plan for a meeting with your own group, with the parents who have been working to create change programs to obtain educational equity.

   - What kinds of data will they be most interested in? Have you included these items?

   - Have you presented information in a way that helps these group members think about their next steps in making changes?

2. Plan for a meeting with the principal and several teachers from a school you have been working with.

   - What kinds of data will they be most interested in?

   - How can you present the information in a way that praises them for things they have done well and that critiques the things not done well? How can you avoid making them feel overly defensive and resistant?

   - Have you presented information in a way that helps each person (principal, teacher, counselor, parent) think about the next steps they can each take to help continue to improve the situation?

3. Plan for a way to share the information with staff members who have refused to work with you in the past.

   - What information do you want to share with them? Will they be interested in that? Interested enough to come to a meeting?

   - What do you have to do to get them to pay attention to your information if they refuse your invitation to a meeting?

to maintain a powerful and caring organization. Many parents stop being active because they think important concerns have been met, and problems solved. The data you have gathered can be proof that this is not so, and that there is much still to be done. For this reason, it will be useful for you to review Exercise 9.2 with the intention of thinking about the kinds of information that can be shared in a large public meeting with new people. Or, what can be shared in small informal meetings in neighborhoods where you haven't been active yet, with parents who have not yet decided to express their educational concerns for their children.

Continuing attention to issues of group process within your organization will help make sure that some people do not drop out because you have not been able to work together. That would be a tragic way to lose important personal energy and resources, and attention to those process issues internally can help. The same is true of the ways in which you run large meetings. They need to be as interesting and energizing as possible.

Some parent groups have decided to change to a more formal organization after they had been working together for a while. This can be a great advantage, especially if you have had success and are becoming known in the community. Then formal rules and election procedures, by-laws and a constitution are critical. In all likelihood, you will benefit from talking with a lawyer who can help you form a legally appropriate organization. In fact, with his or her help, you could decide to apply for a non-profit and tax-exempt status. Some parent organizations who have selected this approach have become eligible for Federal funds to support their role in desegregation activities. They have been able to use these funds to establish training programs, conduct program evaluations, run out-of-school programs for other parents and for students, etc.

One of the dangers involved in becoming a more formal organization is that you might start to develop the "hardening of the arteries" we warned about in Chapter 2. Constant renewal of leadership, recruitment of new members, and a willingness to work on the concerns new people bring with them can help you avoid that trap.

One of the ways in which continuing organizations can maintain their energy and power in improving educational equity is to reach out to others with similar concerns. You can look around your community and see what other groups also are concerned with equity issues in the school or society. Since many groups concerned with equity issues organize exclusively on a single-race, single-sex, single-class basis, it will be important to explain the possibilities of collaboration carefully. If you can join forces, you will be able to multiply your ability to get changes made. Exercise 9.3 (p. 178) can help you assess other organizations' major concerns, and the ways in which they may be similar or helpful to yours.

Think carefully about the advantages and disadvantages of forming a coalition with another group. The most important advantage is that you add another group of people and resources without duplicating effort. You increase your joint power. Moreover, you will be decreasing the competition for resources that might have existed. If the group you are considering is made up of people quite different than your own, then you are adding cultural diversity to your efforts as well. The major disadvantages are that either group might lose some of its distinctiveness by working so closely with another. As you work together there will probably be times when you will be tempted to merge into one group, rather than maintaining separate identities. That may or may not be a good idea. In addition, if you are now forming a coalition with a group that is culturally different, you can expect to experience cultural conflicts and adjustments. This may be a good learning experience for all involved, but it will take time and energy.

In some cities, large and multi-group coalitions have been formed to support and improve school desegregation.[2] Representatives from various racial groups have been members, as have groups from labor unions, businesses and corporations, churches and synagogues, governmental agencies and schools, etc. In some cases, these coalitions contained so many different kinds of organizations they were not very effective. But, by and large, these interracial coalitions played an important role in supporting desegregation in their community, in organizing parent support for school improvement and change, in gathering new resources for new school programs, and for binding various elements of the community together during tense and controversial times. These are all worthwhile endeavors; and they are undoubtedly similar to the issues and concerns that brought you and your group together at the outset of your work.

Summary

This chapter pointed out the importance of not stopping your activity when you have implemented your change program. Follow-up is very important. Depending on the change strategy your group pursued different follow-up activities are possible. We have described these alternatives and stressed the need for continuing outreach activities. We have also provided a process for planning the information gathering you will need to complete in performing your follow-up activities.

Exercise 9.3 Examining the Potential for Coalitions with Other Organizations

Name of Other Organizations or Groups	Their Major Concerns That Might Be Similar	Contact Persons

REFERENCES: CHAPTER 9

1. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, School Desegregation in Santa Barbara, California; School Desegregation in Kirkwood, Missouri; School Desegregation in Berkeley, California; and School Desegregation in Providence, Rhode Island, Washington, D.C., 1977.

2. Desegregation Without Turmoil: The Role of the Multiracial Community Coalition in Preparing for Smooth Transition. New York, National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1977.

A FINAL WORD

Action for educational equity is, quite simply, a difficult job. It will require changes in many aspects of school life. Moreover, it will require changes in the community surrounding the school, and in community agencies that work with schools. The relations between various school and community groups, between various groups of educators, and between various racial, sexual and economic groups, will all have to improve. The skills, commitment, ideas, and energies of many people will be necessary in order for us to accomplish peaceful and lasting change in the direction of greater equality and significantly greater quality in education.

Parent groups who are able to discover and act upon applications of the information in these chapters will have gone a long way toward ensuring peaceful and effective ways of improving educational equity. We hope this book has been and will be helpful in this effort.

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The Institute for Responsive Education (IRE) is a private, non-profit national research, policy analysis and technical assistance organization with a nine-year history of conducting studies on and disseminating information about community involvement in school decisionmaking. Although private and independent, IRE is housed at Boston University, where its President and founder, Don Davies, formerly Deputy Commissioner in the United States Office of Education, is now Professor in the School of Education.

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RELATED IRE PUBLICATIONS

THE HOME-SCHOOL CONNECTION: SELECTED PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS IN LARGE CITIES. Carter Collins, Oliver Moles and Mary Cross. 1982, 158 pp. ($8.00).

This report, by the members of the National Institute of Education's Families As Educators team, is a study of school-initiated programs which explore forms of home-school collaboration at the upper elementary and secondary school levels which may help improve student learning. The Home-School Connection contains a discussion and synthesis of findings across 28 home-school collaboration programs in operation during the 1980-81 school year, site visit reports on seven of these programs, profiles of the 28 programs, and notes toward a comprehensive home-school program.

A TWO-WAY STREET: HOME-SCHOOL COOPERATION IN CURRICULUM DECISIONMAKING. Robert L. Sinclair, ed., with Ralph W. Tyler, Mario D. Fantini, Ward Ghory, Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, and Don Davies. 1980, 92 pp., ($6.00).

The authors in A Two-Way Street examine many aspects of the concept of parent participation in curriculum decisionmaking. These aspects include the influence of parent involvement in academic achievement, ways parents and teachers can work together in making curriculum decisions, and the effects of the hostility and tension which often characterize family-school relations. A Two-Way Street presents ways to advance the idea of home-school cooperation and to tap more fully the energies of the student, the home, and the community to meet the challenges that education faces in the 1980's.

EDUCATION FOR ALL PEOPLE: A GRASSROOTS PRIMER. Institute for Responsive Education staff under the direction of Ronald Walker. 1979, 155 pp., ($6.00).

This encyclopedic guide to educational issues today pinpoints national organizations, Federal programs and funding sources which assist grassroots organizations. It examines issues like school financing, legal rights, desegregation, bilingual and special education, and discusses an array of topics from affirmative action and accountability to minimum competency, vouchers and youth participation. Practical "how-to" information, a brief fund-raising guide, examples of successful grassroots groups, a listing of minority news media, and a directory of national organizations complete this catalogue.

OTHER IRE PUBLICATIONS

CITIZEN ACTION IN EDUCATION. Twice-yearly news journal of the Institute. $5.00 per year voluntary journal contribution.

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON MANAGING DECLINE IN SCHOOL SYSTEMS. Ross Zerchykov, with Owen Heleen. 1982, 276 pp., $14.50.

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OPENING THE DOOR: CITIZEN ROLES IN EDUCATIONAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING. Irving Hamer, Charles Cheng, Melanie Barron, editors. 1979, 194 pp., $4.50.

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